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The
Poets and Poetry
of
Linlithgowshire



ALEX. M. BISSET


6/-

To

John W. M. McInnes,
with the

Sincere regard and esteem
of the Editor.

Bathgate.
27th August, 1896. }





LISLITHGOW PALACE.

Photo by A. B. Clark, Lislithgow.

THE
POETS AND POETRY
OF
LINLITHGOWSHIRE

An Anthology of the County.

BY
ALEX. M. BISSET.



Torphichen Preceptory.

J. AND R. PARLANE, PAISLEY.
JOHN MENZIES AND CO., EDINBURGH AND GLASGOW.
HOULSTON AND SONS, LONDON.
1896.

A.C.

To
THE RIGHT HONOURABLE
THE EARL OF ROSEBERY, K.G., &c.,
EX-PRIME MINISTER OF THESE REALMS,
AND
LORD-LIEUTENANT OF LINLITHGOWSHIRE,
This Anthology of the County
IS, BY HIS
PERMISSION, RESPECTFULLY
Dedicated.

PREFATORY NOTE.

IN this volume a long cherished project takes practical shape. While the work might have been undertaken by one whose literary ability would have done it more justice, the Editor will say for himself that it could scarcely have fallen into hands more willing to treat it with the loving care which it merits. No endeavour has been spared to make it as completely representative of the poetry of the county as possible, and it is hoped that it may win the appreciation of all who are interested in the poetic literature of Linlithgowshire.

To all who in various ways have assisted him in the compilation of this anthology, and to the living authors themselves, whose invariable kindness and courtesy made the work a very pleasant one, the Editor cheerfully acknowledges his indebtedness and tenders his cordial thanks.

A. M. B.

MID STREET, BATHGATE,
June, 1896.

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INTRODUCTION.

THE gift of song is, fortunately, not confined to any one district of Scotland although in many instances a school of poetry seems to be indigenous to certain districts. The ballad, often the poetic outcome of some fierce foray, has its birth on the Borders and in the region of the Grampian range; the hills of the West Highlands are the home of the lament and the sighing "Songs of Selma;" while the Lowlands, with their shady glens and undulating expanse of cultivated fields, more particularly breathe the lay of love and the lyric of the domestic affections.

The poetry of Linlithgowshire has no striking characteristic, but is such as marks the poetic literature of the Lowlands generally. In a country which is incomparably the land of song it would be strange indeed if any portion of it should be left unvisited by the tuneful impulse, and in this respect the county of West Lothian has no reason to humble herself before her more gifted sisters.

Historically the county can look with pride through "the postern of time long elapsed" on the stirring incidents that have been enacted within her borders, and on the many relics of past greatness which are inseparably associated with the history of Scotland.

The ancient Palace of Linlithgow, around which so many memories of bygone glory linger; the old Castle of Bathgate, where Walter the High Steward of Scotland brought his fair young bride Marjory Bruce and so became the progenitor of a long race of Scottish kings; the Preceptory of Torphichen, to which the war-worn Knights of St. John of Jerusalem repaired for rest from the Crusades; Niddry Castle, the home of the loyal Setons, where Queen Mary passed the night after her escape from Lochleven Castle: these, and many more memorials of "the days of other years," invest Linlithgowshire with an interest that grows stronger with the lapse of time.

With such environments and such associations it is somewhat surprising that the county has such a dearth of ballad literature, and that so few of her poets have struck their harps to these themes.

"Many who are not able to reach the Parnassian heights may yet approach so near as to be bettered by the air of the climate," says the *Man of Feeling*, and doubtless some of these will be found in this volume; but a perusal of the following pages will satisfy the most critical that high excellence is the prevailing quality in the poetry of the county.

The selections have been made with the object of having each author represented by his best work; but in some cases this was found impossible owing to the limitations of space, and extracts from a poem, however judiciously

made, are invariably very unsatisfactory. Emerson tells us how he listened with rapture to a bird

“Singing at dawn on the alder bough ;
I brought him home in his nest at even,
He sings the song, but it pleases not now ;
For I did not bring home the river and sky ;
He sang to my ear—they sang to my eye,”—

and in like manner quotations dissociated from their original setting lose much of their beauty ; so that, wherever possible, an endeavour has been made to represent each poet by his shorter yet complete poems.

The chronological order of arrangement has been adopted as the most commendable one for the purpose of imparting some degree of consecution to the various writers and their works. The charm of variety has also been kept in view as much to give the book an additional interest to the reader as to present each author in his various veins of thought ; and it is hoped that this feature will render its perusal a matter of better appreciation to all who may scan its pages.



THE POETS AND POETRY OF LINLITHGOWSHIRE.

JAMES V.

1512-1542.

THE title of James the Fifth to the authorship of *The Guberlunzie Man* and *The Jolly Beggar* is not indisputable ; but, as they are ascribed to him by some of the most competent Scottish anthologists and have never been attributed to any other, we do not hesitate to include them in this work.

James V. was born in the Palace of Linlithgow on 12th April, 1512.

He was but a babe of eighteen months old when

“ The stern strife and carnage drear
Of Flodden’s fatal field ”

made him fatherless, and left Scotland in a disastrous plight.

The young king was fortunate, however, in having for his preceptor the learned ecclesiastic, Gawin Dunbar ; but in all probability he owed more to the kindly care and tuition of Sir David Lindsay than to the instructions of the divine. Lindsay was gentleman usher to the prince from

the day of his nativity : a man capable of entering into the child's every amusement, and blending instruction with recreation. Through Lindsay's high poetical attainments the youthful monarch had an early opportunity of becoming acquainted with all that was noblest and best in literature. Lindsay's art seems to have been to please his royal pupil "with many a fable," and season his stories with such simple counsel as he thought necessary for the improvement of his character and conduct in the future. These efforts were not without impression on the boy, who gave promise of fulfilling to the utmost the expectations of his wise and affectionate tutor. Such high hopes were rudely dispelled by the action of the queen-mother, who, to gratify her own ambition and love of power, had James taken

" Fra the schools
Where he, under obedience,
Was learning virtue and science,"

and nominally placed at the head of the Government while he was yet in his thirteenth year. For the next four years he was simply a puppet in the hands of his unscrupulous mother and the Douglas faction, who maintained a restraint over his actions that amounted to imprisonment. From this galling bondage he escaped at the age of sixteen and took the reins of sovereignty into his own hands. Historians agree that thus early he was every inch a king, and administered equal justice to rich and poor, the peasantry receiving as much attention to their complaints as the most powerful noble. One of his first exercises of regal authority was to restore his early monitors to court favour, and they were ever afterwards treated with marks of esteem and honour.

There is little doubt that the four years he remained in the hands of the Douglasses had a baneful effect on his character. Encouraged by vicious schemers in every profligate adventure, and surrounded by flatterers who tried to secure their own aggrandisement at the expense of his folly, there is little wonder if the precepts of his earlier monitors were often disregarded. Possessed of an amiable disposition, with a mind naturally acute and vigorous, he was much loved by the peasantry, and became popularly known as the "King of the Commons," of which title, we are told, he was very proud.

In various disguises he was wont to travel far and near, and many humorous anecdotes of these itinerancies are still current. In this adventurous manner he was enabled to judge of the peasantry for himself, and his strong enforcement of the law made him a terror to evil doers. Robbers seem to have been his pet aversion, and all through his career he took every opportunity of punishing them "with the utmost rigour of the law."

It is much to his credit that, while many evil influences were brought to bear on his character, he retained a real love for literature, and greatly encouraged the poets and historians of the country by his countenance and generosity, in which Gawin Douglas, Lindsay, Bellenden and Buchanan were all participants.

Music he delighted in, and, if one may judge from the frequency with which the item of "lute-strings" occurs in the Treasurer's accounts, the lute was his favourite instrument. Like his ancestor, James I., he was an ardent wooer of the Muses, and both Lindsay and Bellenden speak of his effusions with high praise, while, fully a century later, Drummond of Hawthornden also bears testimony to

his poetical gifts, "as," he says, "many of his works yet extant testify." It is somewhat unfortunate, therefore, that so little trustworthy information has descended to us on this score. The two pieces which we give are evidently some of his own escapades "done into rhyme"; but they have become modernised in the course of transmission from one generation to another. They are regarded by competent critics as being among the best specimens of early Scottish humour preserved to us. The unfortunate Rout of Solway Moss, of which the elevation of the king's plebeian favourites to the first places of influence and power was a contributing cause, had a despondent effect on his mind. Wounded to the quick by what he considered the defection of his nobles, he retired to the Palace of Falkland, where he died of grief on 13th December, 1542, while yet in his thirty-first year.

THE GABERLUNZIE MAN.

The pawky auld carle cam' o'er the lea,
Wi' mony guid e'ens an' guid days to me;
Sayin', Guidwife, for your courtesie,

Will ye lodge a silly puir man?
The nicht was cauld, the carle was wat,
An' doon ayont the ingle he sat,
My dochter's shouthers he 'gan to clap,
An' cadgily ranted an' sang.

Oh wow! quo' he, were I as free
As first when I saw this countrie,
How blythe an' merry wad I be!
An' I wad never think lang.
He grew canty, an' she grew fain;
But little did her auld minny ken
What thir slee twa thegither were say'n'
When wooing they were sae thrang.

An' oh, quo' he, an ye were as black
As e'er the croun o' my daddy's hat,
It's I wad lay thee by my back,

An' awa' wi' me thou should gang.
An' oh, quo' she, an I were as white
As e'er the snaw lay on the dyke,
I'd cleed me braw an' lady-like,
An' awa' wi' thee I wad gang.

Between the twa was made a plot ;
They rase a wee before the cock,
An' wilily they shot the lock,

An' fast to the bent are they gane.
Up in the morn the auld wife rase,
An' at her leisure pat on her claes ;
Syne to the servant's bed she gaes
To spier for the silly puir man.

She gaed to the bed where the beggar lay ;
The strae was cauld, an' he was away ;
She clapt her hands, an' cried, Waladay,

For some o' our gear will be gane !
Some ran to coffer, an' some to kist,
But nought was stown that could be miss'd ;
She danced her lane, an' cried, Praise be blest,
I ha'e lodged a leal puir man !

Since naething's awa', as we can learn,
The kirn's to kirn, an' milk to earn ;
Gae but the house, lass, an' wauken my bairn,

An' bid her come quickly ben.
The servant gaed where the dochter lay,
The sheets were cauld, an' she was away,
An' fast to the guidwife she 'gan say,
She's aff wi' the gaberlunzie man.

Oh, fyè gar ride, an' fyè gar rin,
 An' haste ye find these traitors again ;
 For she's be burnt, an' he's be slain,
 The wearifu' gaberlunzie man.
 Some rade upo' horse, some ran a-fit,
 The wife was wud an' out o' her wit,
 She couldna gang, nor yet could she sit,
 But aye she cursed an' she banned.

Meantime far 'hind out o'er the lea,
 Fu' snug in a glen, where nane could see,
 The twa, wi' kindly sport an' glee,
 Cut frae a new cheese a whang.
 The priving was guid, it pleased them baith,
 To lo'e her for aye he ga'e her his aith ;
 Quo' she, To leave thee I will be laith,
 My winsome gaberlunzie man.

Oh, kend my minny I were wi' you,
 Ill-faurdly wad she crook her mou',
 Sic a puir man she'd never trow,
 After the gaberlunzie man.
 My dear, quo' he, ye're yet owre young,
 An' ha'e na learned the beggar's tongue,
 To follow me frae toun to toun,
 An' carry the gaberlunzie on.

Wi' cauk an' keel I'll win your bread,
 An' spindles an' whorles for them wha need,
 Whilk is a gentle trade indeed,
 To carry the gaberlunzie on.
 I'll bow my leg, an' crook my knee,
 An' draw a black clout o'er my e'e ;
 A cripple or blind they will ca' me,
 While we shall be merry an' sing.

THE JOLLY BEGGAR.

There was a jolly beggar
And a begging he was boun',
And he took up his quarters
Into a landwart town ;
He wadna lie into the barn,
Nor wad he in the byre—
But in ahint the ha' door
Or else afore the fire.
And we'll gang nae mair a roving,
A roving in the night,
And we'll gang nae mair a roving,
Let the moon shine e'er sae bright.

The beggar's bed was made at e'en
Wi' guid clean straw and hay,
And in ahint the ha' door—
'Twas there the beggar lay.
Up gat the guidman's dochter,
And a' to bar the door,
And there she saw the beggar man
Was standing on the floor.
And we'll gang nae mair a roving,
A roving in the night,
Though maids be e'er sae loving,
And the moon shine e'er sae bright.

He took the lassie in his arms
And to the neuk he ran—
O hoolie, hoolie wi' me, sir,
Ye'll wauken our guidman.
The beggar was a cunning loon,
And ne'er a word he spak'—
But, lang afore the cock had crawn,
Thus he began to crack :

We'll gang nae mair a roving,
A roving in the night,
Save when the moon is moving,
And the stars are shining bright.

He took a wee horn frae his side,
And blew baith loud and shrill,
And four-and-twenty belted knights
Came skipping o'er the hill.
And we'll gang nae mair a roving,
A roving in the night ;
Nor sit a sweet maid loving
By coal or candle light.

And he took out his little knife,
Loot a' his duddies fa',
And he was the brawest gentleman
That was amang them a' !
The beggar was a clever loon,
And he lap shoulder height ;
O aye for siccan quarters
As I got yesternight !
And we'll aye gang a roving,
A roving in the night,
For then the maids are loving,
And stars are shining bright.

MARY QUEEN OF SCOTS.

1542-1588.

MARY, daughter of James V. and Mary of Guise, was born in Linlithgow Palace in December, 1542.¹

The lamentable death of James V. under such sad circumstances made the accession to the Scottish throne of the newly-born infant a singularly pathetic spectacle. No sooner had their late monarch been consigned to his last resting-place than the nobles, whom he had held in check so successfully, broke out into open feud for the possession of this tiny hope of their country—not so much from a desire to ensure her safety as for personal aggrandisement. The turbulence of the times and the

¹ The exact date of Mary's birth is keenly disputed. Almost all historians and biographers assume it to have been on the 8th of December; and Mary herself always named it as such. But a recently discovered document—communicated to Miss Strickland by John Riddell, Esq., of the Faculty of Advocates—shows that, at Stirling, her mother's confinement was, on the 9th of that month, only matter of expectation; and it is clear, that if the event had occurred on the previous day intelligence of it would have reached Stirling. All accounts, too, represent the King as having died on the 13th, a few hours (*Pitcottie* says a few minutes) after the arrival of the news of his daughter's birth: and, as an express had been employed, it is incredible that five days should have elapsed between the event and its report to the dying monarch. It is reasonably conjectured by Miss Strickland that, as the 8th of December is one of the four great Romish festivals in honour of the Virgin Mary, the birth of the young queen may afterwards have been celebrated on that day instead of on the real one, which was most probably the 11th or 12th of the month.—Miss Strickland's *Lives of the Scottish Queens*, vol. 3, p. 7.

war with England consequent on "the rough wooing" of Henry VIII., who sought by an alliance of Mary with his son Edward, then but five years of age, to assert supremacy over Scotland, induced the Scottish nobles to remove the young queen from Linlithgow to Stirling, and thereafter to the Priory of Inchmahome for further security. A proposal to send Mary to the court of Henry II. of France for her education met with the general approval of all parties concerned, and in her sixth year the queen, attended by the Four Maries¹ and a noble escort, was received with becoming honour at the palace of St. Germain.

Together with the king's own daughters she was soon afterwards sent to one of the most celebrated monasteries in France to receive such an education as became a queen. She made rapid progress in the various branches of education in which she was instructed, and attained in all a proficiency that excited universal admiration.

Caressed and admired by all, and surrounded by every enjoyment, the earlier part of Mary's life glided rapidly away, while she herself, in her person gradually advanced towards that perfection of beauty which is to this day matter of interesting speculation, and which she seems to have possessed in the highest degree of which perhaps the human form is susceptible. But remarkable as was the beauty of Mary's person, it was not more worthy of admiration than her intellectual superiority.

¹ These young ladies, celebrated in tradition and song as the Queen's Maries, were Mary Livingston, Mary Fleming, Mary Seton, and Mary Beaton, all of the highest families in Scotland. The Mary Hamilton and Mary Carmichael of the exquisite ballad of the *Queen's Marie*—which purports to commemorate the melancholy fate of the former lady—were evidently later additions to this famous corps.

On the 24th of April, 1558, in her sixteenth year, she was united in marriage to Francis, the Dauphin of France. A year later her husband succeeded to the French throne, and Mary, as Queen of Scotland, heir-presumptive of England, and queen-consort of France, thus combined in herself probably a greater concentration of dignities than ever before occurred in one person. In 1560, after two brief years of happy union, Francis died, and her beautiful and passionate lament on this occasion bears witness to the deep grief of the young widowed queen. In a letter to Philip II. at this time she describes herself as "the most afflicted poor woman under heaven."

In the following year Mary returned to Scotland where she was received with every demonstration of affection. Several years of almost uneventful peace followed, but her marriage with Lord Darnley in 1565 brought a series of miseries in its train which attended her throughout her checkered career, each incident of which is darkly silhouetted against the misty curtains of time. Darnley's murder, the rash and inexplicable marriage with the villain Bothwell, Carberry Hill, Lochleven Castle and the romantic escape from its dreary isolation, the Battle of Langside, the flight to Dundrennan, and the weary eighteen years of imprisonment in the castles of England: these are all invested with a romance and sad interest that never grows less. "Last scene of all, that ends this strange, eventful history," is the grim block within the hall of Fotheringay Castle, where, after a mock trial at which no means of defence was allowed her, Mary was sacrificed to the jealousy and capricious fear of a royal rival whom she excelled in every graceful accomplishment. So perished "the noblest of the Stuart race, the fairest earth has seen,"

on the 8th of February, 1588, while she was yet in her forty-sixth year.

Till within recent years no attempt was made to gather together the scattered remnants of Mary's poems, and the simple statement that the Queen of Scots exercised herself in poetical composition provoked little curiosity or inquiry. A few years ago, however, there appeared a limited edition of *The Poems of Mary Stuart, Queen of Scots*, edited, with an introductory notice, by Julian Sharman. These are all in French, with a few of the sonnets duplicated in Italian, and it is to this little volume that we are indebted for the following poems, with one exception. It is doubtful whether at any time Mary applied herself to the study or composition of English poetry. A distich scrawled on a window at Fotheringay is the only English fragment that can be attributed to her:—

From the top of all my trust
Mishap has laid me in the dust.

In Bishop Montague's preface to the works of James the First allusion is made to a book of French verses by Mary on the *Institution of a Prince*; but this production is now irrecoverably lost. A later writer, Saunderson, mentions having seen this volume in 1656.

The Bothwell Sonnets, of which there are other ten besides those given here, a sonnet to Elizabeth, and some verses to the French poet Ronsard, together with the poems appended, are all that can be now definitely ascribed to her. Of the sonnets to the Earl of Bothwell a clerical author asserts that "these sonnets are as wretched, bombastic stuff as it is possible to imagine"¹; but the undignified


¹ *History of Scotland*, by the Rev. James Mackenzie, 1894: p. 398.

invective which he hurls at the hapless head of Mary in any but clerical language excuses our utter disbelief in his ability to criticise poetry, for he seems to be of the same inclination as the dog in Goethe's *Faust*, which, we are told,

“ At what he understands not, snarls.”

That the passion with which these sonnets burn was an unhallowed one we do not disavow ; but that fact does not detract from their poetic merit, which is very considerable. The verses on her bereavement, so very sweet and touching, breathe the true spirit of poetry ; and in her later sonnets as also in the *Meditations*, composed at a time when the head was sick and the whole heart faint with the dreary, hopeless round of prison life, there are several passages of fine beauty and pathos which give evidence of a highly cultured intellect and imagination.

The following poems have been translated for this work by D. F. Lowe, Esq., M.A., Head-Master of George Heriot's Hospital School, Edinburgh, and formerly Rector of the Bathgate Academy, to whom our heartiest thanks are due for the kindness with which he undertook and fulfilled this labour of love. At his suggestion we have, with the exception of the *Meditations*, converted his translations into English verse, in which it will be found the original has been adhered to as faithfully as possible ; and we trust that this endeavour—the first that has yet been made—to render the poems of the “illustrat Lady” more popular will meet with general approval. For the benefit of the classical reader the original French, the orthography of which it has not been deemed judicious to modernise, is given for comparison.



VERSES ON THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND, FRANCIS II.

1.

En mon triste et doux chant
D'un ton fort lamentable,
Je jette un œil tranchant
De perte incomparable ;
Et en soupirs cuisans,
Passe mes meilleurs ans.

2.

Fut il un tel malheur
De dure destinée,
Ny si triste douleur
De Dame fortunée,
Qui mon cœur et mon œil
Vois en bierre et cercueil.

3.

Qui en mon doux printemps
Et fleur de ma jeunesse,
Toutes les peines sens
D'une extreme tristesse,
Et en rien n'ay plaisir
Qu'en regret et desir.

4.

Ce qui m'estoit plaisant
Ores m'est peine dure,
Le jour le plus luisant
M'est nuit noire et obscure,
Et n'est rien si exquis
Qui de moy soit requis.

5.

J'ay au cœur et a l'œil
Un portrait et image,
Qui figure mon détail
Et mon pasle visage,
De violettes teint,
Qui est l'amoureux teint.

VERSES ON THE DEATH OF HER HUSBAND, FRANCIS II.

1.

In this my sad sweet song
In lamentable strain
I ponder, but no tongue
Can tell my loss or pain ;
And with sad sighs and tears
I pass my brightest years.

2.

Was e'er there such ill-chance
Of hard relentless fate,
Or such sad sufferance
For Dame, so bless'd of late,
Who see my heart and eye
In bier and coffin lie ?

3.

In the sweet budding spring
And flower of youthfulness,
I feel the sharpest sting
Of sorrow's deep excess,
And can no pleasure prove
Save in regret and love.

4.

What once was keen delight
Has now become sharp pain,
The day though e'er so bright
Is dark as night of rain,
And happiness there's not
For which I have one thought.

5.

Within my heart and eye
A portrait has chief place,
Which is the cause of my
Deep grief and my pale face,
Tinged with the violet's hue,—
Which is love's colour true.

6.

Pour mon mal estranger
Je ne m'arreste en place,
Mais j'en ay beau changer
Si ma douleur efface :
Car mon pis et mon mieux
Sont mes plus deserts lieux.

7.

Si en quelque sejour,
Soit en Bois ou en Prée,
Soit pour l'aube du jour,
Ou soit pour la vesprée,
Sans cesse mon cœur sent
Le regret d'un absent.

8.

Si parfois vers ces lieux
Viens à dresser ma veüe,
Le doux trait de ses yeux
Je vois en une nue,
Soudain je vois en l'eau
Comme dans un Tombeau.

9.

Si je suis en repos,
Sommeillant sur ma couche,
J'oy qu'il me teint propos,
Je le sens qu'il me touche ;
En labeur en recoy
Tousjours est prest de moy.

10.

Je ne vois autre objet
Pour beau qu'il se presente,
A qui que soit sujet
Oncques mon cœur consente ;
Exempt de perfection
A cette affliction.

6.

By reason of my grief
I find no resting-place,
In change is no relief
My sorrow to efface ;
Where'er my footsteps press
Is filled with loneliness.

7.

Wherever I abide,
Whether in mead or wood,
Whether at morning-tide,
Or evening's quietude,
My heart incessant mourns
For one who ne'er returns.

8.

If to some scene of joy
My sight attracted be,
The sweet glance of his eye
As in a cloud I see,
Reflected in the wave
As it were in the grave.

9.

If on my couch I rest,
And slumbers o'er me steal,
I hear that voice loved best,
His tender touch I feel ;
Whether at work or sleep
Still doth he near me keep.

10.

No other do I see,
Though fair and young and gay,
To whom all lovingly
My heart will homage pay ;
But this affliction will
Remain unsolaced still.

11.

Mets Chanson icy fin
 A si triste complainte,
 Dont sera le refrain
 Amour vraye et mon fainte :
 Pour la separation
 N'aura diminution.

FAREWELL TO FRANCE.¹

Adieu, plaisant pays de France !
 O ma patrie !
 La plus chérie !
 Qui as nourri ma jeune enfance !
 Adieu, France ! adieu, mes beaux jours ;
 La nef qui disjoint nos amours
 N'a c'y de moi que la moitié :
 Une parte te reste, elle est tienne :
 Je la fie à ton amitié
 Pourquoi de l'autre il te souviennne.

SONNET TO THE EARL OF BOTHWELL.

(Number 2 of the Bothwell Sonnets.)

Entre ses mains et en son plein pouvoir
 Je metz mon filz, mon honneur, et ma vie.
 Mon país, mes subjectz, mon ame assubjectie
 Est tout à luy, et n'ay autre vouloir
 Pour mon object que sans le decevoir
 Suivre je veux malgré toute l'envie
 Qu'issir en peult : Car je n'ay autre envie
 Que de ma foi luy faire appercevoir
 Que pour tempeste ou bonnace qui face
 Jamais ne veux changer demeure ou place.

¹These beautiful lines, said to have been written by Mary on leaving France, are taken from *Specimens of the British Poetesses*, by Rev. Alexander Dyce, A.B., 1825. The *Chanson* may also be seen in the

11.

Here let me end the strain
Of a sad heart, sore pained,
Of which the true refrain
Will be my love unfeigned :
The loss which wrecks my peace
Will nevermore decrease.

FAREWELL TO FRANCE.

Thou charming land of France, adieu !
O homeland fair !
Most dear, most rare,
Who nursed me all my childhood through !
Farewell, France ! farewell, my happy days ;
The ship which parts our loves conveys
Only the half of me from thee :
One part remains with thee, 'tis thine ;
It to thy keeping I consign,
That still thou may'st remember me.

SONNET TO THE EARL OF BOTHWELL.

(Number 2 of the Bothwell Sonnets.)

Into his hands and his power full and free
I place my son, life, honour—dearer still ;
My country, subjects, and the citadel
Of my storm'd heart are all his, and for me
I have no other wish than faithfully
To follow him in spite of all of ill
That may spring from it : for I have no will
Than by my faith to make him clearly see
That, whether calm or tempest we must face,
I never wish to change my home or place.

Brief, je feray de ma foy telle preuve
 Qu'il cognoistra, sans fainte, ma constance
 Non par mes pleurs, ou fainte obeysance,
 Comme autres ont fait, mais par divers espreuves.

SONNET TO THE EARL OF BOTHWELL.

(Number 8 of the Bothwell Sonnets.)

Mon amour croist, et plus en plus croistra
 Tant que je vivray, et tiendray à grandheur
 Tant seulement d'avoir part en ce cœur
 Vers qui en fin mon amour paroistra
 Sy très à clair que jamais n'en doutra.
 Pour luy je veux recercher la grandeur,
 Et feray tant qu'en vray cognoistra
 Que je n'ay bienheur ne contentment
 Qu' à l' obeyir et servir loyaument.
 Pour luy j'attendz toute bonne fortune,
 Pour luy je veux garder santé et vie,
 Pour luy tout vertu de suivre j'ay envie,
 Et sans changer me trouvera tout' une.

SONNET WRITTEN DURING HER IMPRISONMENT.

L'ire de Dieu par le sang ne s'appaise
 De boufs, ny boucs, espandu sur l'autel ;
 Ny par encens ou Sacrifice tel
 Le Souverain ne reçoit aucun aise.
 Qui veult, Seigneur, faire œuvre qui te plaise
 Il faut qu'il ayt sa foy en l'Immortel,
 Avec espoir charité au mortel,
 Et bien faisant que ton loz il ne taise.
 L'oblation qui t'est seule agréable
 C'est un esprit, en oraison constant,
 Humble et devot, et un corps chaste estant
 O Tout-puissant, sois moy si favorable
 Que pour tousjours ces graces dans mon cœur
 Puissent rester à ta gloire et honneur.

In brief, I shall my confidence prove so
That he will know my faith without pretence,
Not by my tears or feigned obedience,
As some have done, but different proofs I'll show.

SONNET TO THE EARL OF BOTHWELL.

(Number 8 of the Bothwell Sonnets.)

My love grows, and its growing sway I'll own
While I shall live, and I'll for greatness care
Only so much as in that heart I share,
To which at last my true love will be shown
When, clearer still, all doubt shall be o'erthrown.
For him I will all paths to greatness dare,
And shall so act that to him 'twill be known
That joy and peace of mind in naught I see
Save to obey and serve him loyally.
For his sake all good fortune is my aim,
For him I would my health and life renew,
For him desire each virtue to pursue,
And, all unchanged, he'll find me still the same.

SONNET WRITTEN DURING HER IMPRISONMENT.

The wrath of God we never can appease
By blood of bulls or goats on altars spilled ;
Nor sacrifice nor incense sweet distilled
The Sovereign Power with any pleasure sees.
Whoe'er desires, O Lord, thine eye to please
On the Immortal he his faith must build,
With hope and charity to mankind filled,
And by good deeds extol thy wise decrees.
The off'ring which alone is dear to thee
Is a true spirit, constant unto prayer,
Devout and humble, in a virtuous frame.
Almighty God ! such favour have for me
That in my heart may dwell these graces rare
To th' honour and the glory of Thy name.

VERSES WRITTEN AT FOTHERINGAY.

Que suis-je, hélas ! et de quoi sert la vie ?
 J'en suis fors qu'un corps privé de cœur ;
 Un ombre vayn, un objet de malheur,
 Qui n'a plus rien que de mourir en vie.
 Plus ne me portez, O enemys, d'envie
 Qui n'a plus l'esprit à la grandeur,
 J'ai consommé d'excessive douleur ;
 Voltre ire en bref de voir assouvie.
 Et vous amys, qui m'avez tenu chère,
 Souvenez-vous que sans cœur et sans santey
 Je ne sçaurois aucun bon œuvre faire ;
 Et que sus bas estant assez punie
 J'aie ma part en la joie infinie.

MEDITATIONS.

Written on the Receipt of a Religious Work of the Bishop of Ross.¹

Lors qu'il convient à chacun reposer,
 Et pour un temps tout soucy déposer,
 Une souvenir de mon amere vie
 Me vient oster de tout dormir l'envie,
 Representant à mes yeux vivement
 De bien en mal un soudain changement,
 Qui distiller me fait lors sur la face
 La triste humeur, qui tout plaisir efface.
 Dont tost après, cherchant de m'allegier,
 J'entre en discours, non frivole ou legier,
 Considerant du monde l'inconstance
 Et des mortels le trop peu d'assurance ;
 Jugeant par la rien n'estre permanent,
 Ny bien ny mal, dessous le firmament.

¹The work referred to is *Afflicti Animi Consolationes et Tranquilli Animi Conservatio*: Paris, 1574. Its author, John Leslie, Bishop of Ross (1526-1596), was distinguished for the indefatigable exertions which he made in behalf of Queen Mary. He interceded for her at the court of Queen Elizabeth ; but finding this of no avail, he contrived means for her escape. The plot was discovered, and Leslie was committed to the

VERSES WRITTEN AT FOTHERINGAY.

Of what use is my life? and what am I?
 Naught but a casket robbed of all its treasure;
 A shadow vain, the sport of fortune's leisure,
 With nothing more in life except to die.
 O enemies! lay your resentment by
 For I in greatness now have no more pleasure;
 I am consumed with grief beyond all measure:
 Your hate will shortly have satiety.
 And you, my friends, who still have held me dear
 Remember—without health and without strength
 I could accomplish no good work, I fear;
 And, being punished in sufficiency here,
 In joy perpetual I shall share at length.

MEDITATIONS

Written on the Receipt of a Religious Work of the Bishop of Ross.

When every one should be at rest,
 And for a time should lay aside all care,
 A memory of my bitter life
 Oft comes to take away the wish for sleep;
 Depicting vividly before my eyes
 My sudden change from good to evil fortune,
 Which forces down my cheeks a flow
 Of mournful tears, effacing every pleasure.
 Then, seeking to relieve myself of this my grief,
 I enter into discourse, not light or frivolous,
 Concerning the inconstancy of the world
 And the too little security of mortals;
 Judging nothing to be lasting,
 Either good or ill, under heaven.

Tower of London. He was released in a few years, but was banished to the Continent, where he made futile efforts to interest the continental princes in Mary's behalf. He published a *Defence of the Honour of Mary, Queen of Scotland*, at Liège, in 1571.—See Chambers's *Dictionary of Eminent Scotsmen*.

Ce que soudain me met en souvenance
Des sages dicts du Roy plein de prudence.
J'ay, ce dit-il, cherché tous les plaisirs
Qui peuvent plus assouvir mes desirs,
Mais je n'ay veu en ceste masse ronde
Que vanité ; donc fol est qui s'y fonde
De quoy mes yeux experience ont eu
Durant noz jours ; car j'ay souvent veu
Ceux qui touchoient les haults cieux de la teste
Soudainement renversés par tempeste.
Les plus grands Roys, Monarques, Empereurs,
De leur estats et vies ne sont seurs,
Bastir palais et amasser chevance
Retourne en brief en perte et decadence.
Estre venu des parens genereux
N'empesche point qu'on ne soit malheureux.
Les beaux habits, le jeu, les ris, la danse
Ne laissent d'eux que dueil et repentance,
Et la beauté, tant agréable aux yeux,
Se part de nous quand nous devenons vieux
Boire et manger et vivre tout à l'aise
Revient aussi à douleur et malaise :
Beaucoup d'amis richesse ny sçavoir
De contenter qui les a n'ont pouvoir.
Brief, tout le bien de ceste vie humaine
Se garde peu et s'acquiert à grand'peine.
Que nous sert donc icy nous amuser
Aux vanitez qui ne font qu'abuser ?
Il fault chercher en bien plus haulte place
Le vray repos, le plaisir, et la grace
Qui promise est à ceux qui de bon cœur
Retourneront à l'unique Saveur :
Car au ciel est nostre éternel partage,
Là ordonné pour nous en heritage.
Mais qui pourra, ô père tres humain,
Avoir cest heur si tu n'y mets la main
D'abandonner son peché et offense,
En ayant fait condigne penitence ?

This suddenly brings me into remembrance
Of the sayings of the wise king.
“I have,” said he, “sought every pleasure
Which might satisfy my desires,
But I have seen nothing in this round world
But vanity. A fool then is he who trusts to it
By what my eyes have seen during my days.
For I have often seen those who touched
The high heavens with their head
Suddenly overthrown by tempest.”
The greatest Kings, Monarchs, Emperors
Are not sure either of their states or their lives.
To build palaces and to amass wealth
Soon returns to destruction and decay.
To have sprung from noble parents
Does not prevent one becoming unfortunate.
Fine raiment, gaming, laughter, and the dance
Leave only mourning and repentance,
And beauty, so agreeable to the eyes,
Departs from us when we become old :
To drink and to eat and to fare comfortably
Turns also to grief and weariness :
Many friends, riches, knowledge—
None of these have power to content their possessors.
In a word, all the good things of this life
Are held but for a short time and acquired with great labour.
Of what use is it then to amuse ourselves here
With vanities which only lead to abuse ?
We must seek in a far higher place
True rest, pleasure, and the grace
Which is promised to those who sincerely
Shall return to the only Saviour :
For our eternal portion is in heaven,
Ordained for us as our heritage.
But who shall be able, O Father most loving,
To have this happiness if thou assist him not
To abandon his sin and offences,
Having made sincere repentance for them ?

Ou qui pourra ce monde despriser
 Pour seul t'aimer, honorer, et priser ?
 Nul pour certain, si ta douce clemence
 Le prevenant a tel bien ne l'avance ;
 Parquoy, Seigneur et Père Souverain,
 Regarde moy de visage serain,
 Dont regardas la femme pecheresse
 Qui à tes pieds pleuroit ses maux sans cesse,
 Dont regardas Pierre pareillement
 Qui jà t'avoit nié par jurement ;
 Et comme à eux donne moy ceste grace
 Que ta mercy tous mes pechez efface.
 En retirant de le monde mon cœur
 Fay l'aspirer à l'Eternel bonheur.

Donne, Seigneur, donne moy patience,
 Amour, et foy, et en toy esperance ;
 L'humilité, avec devotion,
 De te servir de pure affection.
 Envoye moy ta divine prudence
 Pour empescher que peché ne m'offence.
 Jamais de moy n'esloigné verité,
 Simple douceur avecques charité :
 La chastité et la perseverance
 Demure en moy avec obeissance.
 De tous erreurs, Seigneur, preserve moy,
 Et tous les jours, Christ, augmente la foy
 Que j'ay receu de ma mère l'Eglise,
 Où j'ay recours pour mon lieu de franchise
 Contre peché, ignorance, et orgueil,
 Qui font aller au perdurable dueil.
 Permetis, Seigneur, que tousjours mon bon Ange
 Soit pres de moy, et t'offre ma louange,
 Mes oraisons, mes larmes, et soupirs,
 Et de mon cœur tous les justes desirs.
 Ton saint Esprit sur moy face demeure
 Tant que voudras qu'en ce monde je dure :
 Et quand, Seigneur, ta clemence et bonté

Or who is able to despise this world
In order to love, honour, and value thee alone ?
No one indeed, if thy sweet clemency,
Assisting him, do not lead him to such happiness :
Wherefore, Sovereign Lord and Father,
Regard me favourably,
As thou didst look upon the sinful woman
Who wept unceasingly at thy feet for her faults :
As likewise thou didst look on Peter
Who had already denied thee with an oath ;
And as thou gav'st to them, so give to me that grace
That thy mercy may blot out all my sins.
In withdrawing my heart from this world
Do thou make it seek after eternal bliss.

Give, O Lord, give me patience,
Love, and faith and hope in thee :
Give me humility, with devotion,
To serve thee with pure love.
Send me thy divine prudence
To hinder sin from leading me astray.
Let not truth ever depart from me
Nor gentle sweetness and charity :
Let chastity and diligence in well-doing
And obedience remain in me.
Preserve me from all errors, O Lord,
And let Christ increase every day
The faith which I received from Mother Church,
To which I have recourse for freedom
From sin, ignorance, and pride,
Which lead to consuming grief.
Permit, O Lord, that my good Angel
May always be near me, and that I may offer thee my praise,
My prayers, my tears, my sighs,
And all the just desires of my heart.
Let thy holy Spirit remain near me
So long as it is thy wish that I remain in the world :
And when, O Lord, thy clemency and thy goodness

M'oster voudra de la captivité
Ou mon esprit reside en cette vie,
Pleine de maux, de tourmens, et d'envie,
Me souvenir donne moy le pouvoir
De tes merces, et fiance y' avoir,
Ayant au cœur ta passion escrite,
Que j' offriray au lieu de mon merite.

Donques, mon Dieu, ne m' abandonne point,
Et mesmement en cette extreme poinct.
A celle fin que tes voyes je tienne
Et que vers toy à la fin je parviennne.

La Verty M'attire.

MARIE STUARTE.

May decree to take me from the captivity
In which my soul remains in this life,
Full of evils, of torments, and of regret,
Give me the power to remember
Thy mercies, and to put my trust in them,
Having thy love written in my heart,
Which I shall offer instead of any merit of my own.

Do not then, O my God, abandon me,
And especially in my extremity.
Let me hold to thy ways unto the end
So that at the last I may reach unto thee.

Virtue draws me to thee.

MARY STUART.

WILLIAM HAMILTON OF BANGOUR

1704-1754.

WILLIAM HAMILTON was born at Bangour in the parish of Uphall in 1704. His ancestors were an ancient and influential family in Ayrshire, and as there is also a Bangour in that county some dubiety has been expressed as to the place of the poet's nativity. Recent research, however, has proved that Bangour in West Lothian was in possession of his family for four generations before the poet's birth, so that the local claim is placed beyond question. It is more than probable that Bangour in Linlithgowshire was so named after the ancestral estate in Ayrshire, which would account for the confusion that has arisen from the similarity of name.

With regard to Hamilton's early life very little is known. This much is certain, that such education as the times demanded of one who, by his social position, could gain entrance to the highest circles in the country, was freely extended to the promising and brilliant young poet. His published works prove him to have been well versed in ancient and contemporary literature, and evince a refinement of taste that was by no means a characteristic of the age in which he lived, or of the poetry of his time which too frequently had affectation and gross indelicacy as its principal components. The pithy Scottish phraseology of Dunbar and the earlier "makars" was giving place to the inflated verbosity and strained conceits of the English bards.

Drummond of Hawthornden had laid aside the Doric with some success, with the result that the rising Scottish poets attempted to follow his example without possessing either his erudition or his genius. Accordingly it came to pass that the poetry north of the Tweed abounded in mutilated metaphors and fanciful phrases which only escaped the charge of being vague by being totally incomprehensible.

Of course it was almost impossible that young Hamilton should escape the general perversion and contamination, and we are not surprised to find some of his productions interspersed with the requisite liberal proportion of Strephons and Delias: Damons and Chloes: piping love-sick shepherds and inaccessibly obdurate shepherdesses. This fanciful Arcadia, however, was eclipsed by the publication, in 1724, of Allan Ramsay's *Tea-table Miscellany*, in which the Doric successfully re-asserted itself and maintained its power over Scottish hearts by becoming the popular literary language of the day. In this work Ramsay was ably assisted by several "ingenious young gentlemen," as he names them in the preface, of whom William Hamilton, although only in his twentieth year, was one of the most prominent contributors.

Associated in this work with Ramsay was another William Hamilton, of Gilbertfield, who by the similarity of name is often confounded with our poet. It is matter for much regret that Ramsay did not incorporate an index of authors with his *Miscellany* instead of the hieroglyphical X Y Z by which the reader can only ascertain that one song is ancient, that another is modern, or that yet another is ancient with modern alterations and additions.

Hamilton now became recognised as a poet of repute,

and lived the gay life of a man about town. We are told that "he possessed the social virtues in an eminent degree," and his talent would doubtless make him a welcome guest in the higher circles of Edinburgh society.

In 1745 Scotland became convulsed by the horrors of civil war, when the Bonnie Prince Charlie of Scottish hearts and Scottish song flung to the breeze the standard of an ancient line of kings, and amid the fastnesses of a lonely Highland glen called on the loyal clansmen to do battle for the exiled Stuarts. His march to the Lowlands and triumphant entry into Edinburgh; the victory of Prestonpans; the subsequent festivities at Holyrood; the brilliant and daring march into the heart of England; the masterly and orderly retreat, cheered by a victory over the government troops at Falkirk; and the last act of this Romance of the White Cockade on the fatal field of Culloden are all matters of history.

Among those who threw in their lot with the gallant young Prince in his foolhardy and reckless undertaking was William Hamilton, who became the laureate of the expedition. The Battle of Prestonpans he celebrated in a beautiful poem beginning, *As over Gladsmuir's blood-stained field*, which was set to music by William Macgibbon who published three well-known volumes of Scottish tunes, and to his air it afterwards appeared in Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum*. After the dispersion of the Highlanders, consequent on their defeat at Culloden, Hamilton, like many other adherents of the ruined cause, was compelled, in the emphatic words of Scripture, to wander "in deserts and mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth." It was during this period of hardship and suffering, when ostracised from all the luxuries and

refinements of the fashionable society to which he had been accustomed, that he composed the following beautiful *Soliloquy* which breathes a spirit of hope and resignation that reflects credit alike on the head and heart of the author. It is dated June, 1746.

Mysterious inmate of this breast,
Enkindled by thy flame ;
By thee my being's best exprest,
For what thou art I am.

With thee I claim celestial birth,
A spark of heaven's own ray ;
Without thee sink to vilest earth
Inanimated clay.

Now, in this sad and dismal hour
Of multiplied distress,
Has any former thought the power
To make thy sorrows less ?

When all around thee cruel snares
Threaten thy destined breath,
And every sharp reflection bears
Want, exile, chains or death ;

Can aught that passed in youth's fond reign
Thy pleasing vein restore ;
Lives beauty's gay and festive train
In memory's soft store ?

Or does the muse—'tis said her art
Can fiercest pangs appease—
Can she to thy poor trembling heart
Now speak the words of peace ?

Yet she was wont at early dawn
To whisper thy repose,
Nor was her friendly aid withdrawn
At grateful evening's close.

Friendship, 'tis true, its sacred might
May mitigate thy doom,
As lightning shot across the night
A moment gilds the gloom.

O God ! thy providence alone
Can work a wonder here,
Can change to gladness every moan,
And banish all my fear.

Thy arm, all powerful to save,
May every doubt destroy,
And from the horrors of the grave
New raise to life and joy.

From this, as from a copious spring,
Pure consolation flows ;
Makes the faint heart 'midst suffering sing,
And 'midst despair repose.

Yet from its creature gracious Heaven,
Most merciful and just,
Asks but for life and safety given,
Our faith and humble trust.

After encountering many dangers and enduring many hardships Hamilton eventually escaped to France, and found refuge there with others of the expatriated adherents of the Stuarts. Here he remained for three years, when, the first bitterness of the rebellion having been extracted from the government mouth, the intercession of his many powerful friends secured his pardon, and he returned to Scotland in 1749. In the following year, on the death of his elder brother, he succeeded to the paternal estate, and settled down to the quiet life of a country gentleman. But signs of ill-health began to betray themselves. He had never been of a robust nature, and the fatigues and rigours

which had been his lot while under attaint had wrought serious inroads on a constitution naturally delicate. The benefits of the continental climate were tried ; but death had set his seal on the bard's brow, and he died at Lyons on the 25th of March, 1754, in the 50th year of his age. His remains were brought home to Scotland and interred in the Abbey Church of Holyrood.

He was married twice. By his first wife, a daughter of Sir James Hall, Bart., he had a son who succeeded him in the estate.

Several editions of his works have been published. The first collection appeared in 1748 at Glasgow, while the author was in France. This edition appeared without the author's name, and without his consent or even knowledge. It was afterwards reprinted. On his return from banishment he made some corrections on the Glasgow copy, with the probable intention of issuing a complete and correct edition of his works ; but the intention, if it was ever entertained, was never fulfilled. A more complete edition, though it does not contain some of his best efforts, was posthumously published under the supervision of his friends in 1760. A copy of this edition lies before us, and is prefixed by a wood-cut engraving of the poet, which images a fine face with a Greek cast of features, and long curling hair falling on the neck and shoulders. The latest edition of his poems was published in 1850.

Hamilton's efforts were chiefly confined to translations of the Pindaric Odes, and to imitations of the Odes of Horace, some of which are particularly good. Like many other Scottish poets he evidently contemplated an epic on the War of Independence, but it goes no further than a speech of Randolph, in which he gives Bruce an account of

his lineage. Some of his songs are very fine productions ; but it is to *The Braes of Yarrow* that he is indebted for the perpetuation of his fame. It purports to be "in imitation of the ancient Scottish manner," and its success as a ballad has probably been equal to the poet's most sanguine desire. Wordsworth's three poems on the Yarrow are all reflections of this beautiful and simple effort of William Hamilton. Professor Aytoun terms it "a very beautiful poem."

THE BRAES OF YARROW.

Bridegroom—

"Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride,
Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome marrow !
Busk ye, busk ye, my bonny, bonny bride,
And think nae mair on the braes of Yarrow."

Stranger—

"Where gat ye that bonny, bonny bride,
Where gat ye that winsome marrow ?"

Bridegroom—

"I gat her where I dare na weel be seen—
Pu'ing the birks on the braes of Yarrow.

Weep not, weep not, my bonny, bonny bride,
Weep not, weep not, my winsome marrow ;
Nor let thy heart lament to leave
Pu'ing the birks on the braes of Yarrow !"

Stranger—

"Why does she weep, thy bonny, bonny bride ?
Why does she weep, thy winsome marrow ?
And why dare ye nae mair weel be seen
Pu'ing the birks on the braes of Yarrow ?"

Bridegroom—

“Lang maun she weep, lang maun she, maun she weep,
Lang maun she weep with dule and sorrow ;
And lang may I nae mair weel be seen
Pu’ing the birks on the braes of Yarrow :

For she has tint her lover, lover dear—
Her lover dear, the cause of sorrow ;
And I have slain the comeliest swain
That e’er pu’d birks on the braes of Yarrow !

Why runs thy stream, O Yarrow, Yarrow, reid ?
Why on thy braes heard the voice of sorrow ?
And why yon melancholious weeds
Hung on the bonny birks of Yarrow ?

What’s yonder floats on the rueful, rueful flood ?
What’s yonder floats ? O dule and sorrow !
’Tis he, the comely swain I slew
Upon the duleful braes of Yarrow.

Wash, O wash his wounds, his wounds in tears,
His wounds in tears of dule and sorrow ;
And wrap his limbs in mourning weeds
And lay him on the braes of Yarrow.

Then build, then build, ye sisters, sisters sad,
Ye sisters sad, his tomb with sorrow ;
And weep around in waeful wise
His hapless fate on the braes of Yarrow !

Curse ye, curse ye, his useless, useless shield,
My arm that wrought the deed of sorrow,
The fatal spear that pierced his breast—
His comely breast on the braes of Yarrow !

Did I not warn thee not to, not to love,
And warn from fight ? but, to my sorrow,
Too rashly bold, a stronger arm
Thou met’st—and fell on the braes of Yarrow !”

Bride—

“Sweet smells the birk, green grows, green grows the grass,
 Yellow on Yarrow’s braes the gowan ;
 Fair hangs the apple frae the rock,
 Sweet the wave of Yarrow flowin’.”

Bridegroom—

“Flows Yarrow sweet? as sweet, as sweet flows Tweed,
 As green its grass, its gowan as yellow ;
 As sweet smells on its braes the birk,
 The apple frae the rock as mellow.

Fair was thy love, fair, fair indeed thy love ;
 In flowery bands thou didst him fetter :
 Tho’ he was fair, and well-beloved again,
 Than me he never loved thee better.

Busk ye then, busk, my bonny, bonny bride,
 Busk ye, busk ye, my winsome marrow ;
 Busk ye and lo’e me on the banks of Tweed,
 And think nae mair on the braes of Yarrow.”

Bride—

“How can I busk, a bonny, bonny bride,
 How can I busk, a winsome marrow ;
 How lo’e him on the banks of Tweed
 That slew my love on the braes of Yarrow ?

O Yarrow fields, may never, never rain
 Nor dew thy tender blossoms cover !
 For there was basely slain my love - -
 My love as he had not been a lover !

The boy put on his robes, his robes of green,
 His purple vest—’twas my ain sewin’ :
 Ah, wretched me ! I little, little knew
 He was in these to meet his ruin.

The boy took out his milk-white, milk-white steed.
 Unheedful of my dule and sorrow ;
 But ere the to-fall of the night
 He lay a corpse on the braes of Yarrow.

Much I rejoiced that wæful, wæful day ;
I sang—my voice the woods returning ;—
But lang ere night the spear was floun
That slew my love and left me mourning.

What can my barbarous, barbarous father do
But with his cruel rage pursue me ?
My lover's blood is on thy spear ;
How canst thou, barbarous man, then woo me ?

My happy sisters may be, may be proud ;
With cruel and ungentle scoffin',
May bid me seek on Yarrow's braes
My lover nailed in his coffin :

My brother Douglas may upbraid,
And strive with threatening words to move me :
My lover's blood is on thy spear,
How canst thou ever bid me love thee ?

Yes, yes, prepare the bed, the bed of love ;
With bridal sheets my body cover ;
Unbar, ye bridal maids, the door,
Let in the expected husband lover.

But who the expected husband, husband is ?
His hands, methinks, are bathed in slaughter,—
Ah me ! what ghastly spectre's yon
Comes, in his pale shroud, bleeding after ?

Pale as he is, here lay him, lay him down ;
O lay his cold head on my pillow :
Take aff, take aff these bridal weeds,
And crown my careful head with willow.

Pale tho' thou art, yet best, yet best beloved,
O, could my warmth to life restore thee,
Ye'd lie all night between my briests,—
No youth lay ever there before thee !

Pale, pale indeed ! O lovely, lovely youth,
 Forgive, forgive so foul a slaughter ;
And lie all night between my brieds,—
 No youth shall ever lie there after.”

Bridegroom—

“ Return, return, O mournful, mournful bride ;
 Return and dry thy useless sorrow :
Thy lover heeds nought of thy sighs,—
 He lies a corpse on the braes of Yarrow.”

REV. WILLIAM WILKIE, D.D.

"THE SCOTTISH HOMER."

1721-1772.

THE name of William Wilkie does not raise those feelings of patriotic pride and ardour in the breasts of the present generation which one would naturally expect when mentioning a poet who in his day was enthusiastically hailed by press and public as "The Scottish Homer." The name of Wilkie is indeed highly honoured by Scotsmen, not, however, in the realm of poesy, but in the sister-land of art, where the matchless brush of Sir David Wilkie has for ever secured him a place in that glorious Scottish triumvirate—Burns, Scott, and Wilkie.

William Wilkie was born at Echline,¹ in the parish of Dalmeny, on the 5th of October, 1721. His father, a man of intelligence and sterling integrity, was the proprietor of a small farm; but adverse circumstances clouded his later years, and, in the forcible phrase of Burns, "hungry ruin had him in the wind." William received the rudiments of his education at the parish school of Dalmeny, then kept by a Mr Riddell, a teacher of some ability. Thus early the budding genius was admired for his poetic fancy, and ere he was ten years old had written poems of considerable merit.

¹ It has been shrewdly suggested that Echline is a corruption of Atheling. Port Edgar and Queensferry derive their names from the Royal Saxon refugees; and the suggested derivation of Echline is highly probable.

At the age of thirteen he was taken from school and sent to the University of Edinburgh, where his literary acquirements and brilliant talents obtained for him immediate distinction. He was also characterised by a bluntness of manner which amounted to boorishness, but despite this, he gained and retained the friendship of such men of note as Dr. Robertson, David Hume, Adam Smith, and John Home. In his life of Home, Mackenzie says that Wilkie was regarded by his friends as "*superior in genius to any man of his time*, but rough and unpolished in his manners, and still less accommodating to the decorum of society in the ordinary habits of his life." This rude address clung to him all through life, and became intensified with advancing years. Charles Townsend, the famous English politician, who was introduced to Wilkie and spent the day with him at the house of Dr. Carlyle of Inveresk, was greatly impressed with the poet's ability; but afterwards made the caustic observation that he "never met with a man who approached so near to the two extremes of a god and a brute as Dr. Wilkie."

While prosecuting his theological studies at Edinburgh his father died in somewhat poor circumstances, leaving his son the stock and lease of the farm of Fisher's Tryst, near Edinburgh, to which he had removed a year or two previously. To this was added the charge of maintaining three unmarried sisters for whom no other provision had been made.

"Ah! who can tell how many a soul sublime
Has felt the influence of malignant star,
And waged with Fortune an eternal war;
Check'd by the scoff of Pride, by Envy's frown,
And Poverty's unconquerable bar,
In life's low vale remote has pined alone."

Whether or not such thoughts as Beattie has here so feelingly portrayed surged through the heart of Wilkie at this crisis we know not ; but he accepted the inevitable, and devoted himself to agricultural pursuits. However, while yielding himself to the labours of farming he did not neglect his studies in divinity, and eventually became licensed as a minister of the gospel, although he did not obtain a charge till several years later. In the meantime he set himself assiduously to his farm duties. He was a hard-working and skilful farmer, and so successful was he in the cultivation of the potato, which had been but lately introduced, that he was facetiously known in the district by the nickname of "the tautie minister."

During this period of toil and persevering industry he found leisure to cultivate his classical attainments, and it was amid the care and worry of farm life that he conceived, and for the most part composed, his *Epigoniad*, the epic poem which brought him celebrity.

In 1753 he was ordained assistant and successor to Mr Guthrie, minister of the parish of Ratho ; the duties of which he fulfilled for three years, when the death of the senior minister gave him full charge. While acting as assistant he did not relinquish his farm ; but divided his time and attention with impartiality between the pulpit and the plough.

The Epigoniad was published at Edinburgh in 1757, and was immediately hailed by scholars and critics as a masterpiece. The poem is in nine books and is founded on the story of the sack of Thebes, in the fourth book of Homer's *Iliad*. Two years later a second edition was issued with the addition of *A Dream, in the manner of Spenser*. He was frequently compared by the critics to the blind bard of

ancient Greece, whose *Iliad* was unquestionably the model on which his epic was composed, and he acquired the name of "the Scottish Homer"—an appellation which must be allowed to be distinctly in advance of "the tautie minister."

A contemporary critic says,—"*The Epigoniad* will probably always be admired. Without speaking of the happy choice of the subject, and of the merit of many of the characters of that epic poem, it may be enough to say that the episode of Hercules, taken by itself, is sufficient to entitle the poet to perpetual fame." Mackenzie remarks that "perhaps it suffers from its author having the Homeric imitation constantly in view, in which, however, he must be allowed to have been very successful—so successful that a person ignorant of Greek will better conceive what Homer is in the original by perusing the *Epigoniad* than by reading even the excellent translation of Pope." Succeeding generations have not confirmed the judgment of his contemporaries in this matter, and the great epic so hailed and heralded at its birth now sleeps "the sleep that knows no waking." *Sic transit gloria mundi.*

In 1759 Wilkie succeeded David Young in the Chair of Natural Philosophy at St. Andrews University, which shortly afterwards acknowledged his ability by conferring on him the degree of D.D. At St. Andrews he resumed his agricultural hobby, and in this way he amassed an independence of £3000, a decided proof of his skill and economy in this line.

In 1768 he published his *Fables*, consisting of sixteen moral fables and a dialogue in verse, which did not enhance his reputation as a poet.

Of his characteristics and peculiarities some interesting reminiscences have been preserved. His early struggles

had engendered a parsimonious disposition, which probably did not proceed so much from any love of lucre as from a desire to be independent. Latterly he was in the habit of dispensing £20 annually to charitable objects. He used to remark, "I have shaken hands with poverty up to the very elbow, and I wish never to see her face again." He had a great abhorrence to having clean sheets on his bed, which he dreaded as the source of damp and its attendant evils, and it was his custom when necessity compelled him to stay over-night from home, to drag the clean linen from the bed ere he entered it. We are told that on one occasion, being pressed by Lady Lauderdale to sleep at Hatton, he reluctantly agreed, but only on condition that he should be indulged with the luxury of a pair of soiled sheets!

In conversation he was often very abstracted, subject to an extraordinary degree of absent-mindedness, which failing sometimes placed him in the most awkward and embarrassing situations. Among his other amusing eccentricities was the love he entertained for being "weel-happit," as a precaution against ague—the fear of which perpetually haunted him—and he was known to sleep wrapped in no less than twenty-four pairs of blankets in order that he might perspire freely. His presence of mind on this subject never forsook him, however it might stray on others of more moment.

By the men of his own time he was highly esteemed for his brilliant mental faculties which, despite the rudeness of his manner and his many eccentric ways, procured for him the regard and friendship of many of the most distinguished men of the period.

After a protracted indisposition he died at St. Andrews on 10th October, 1772, in his fifty-second year.

Through the kindness of Mr J. T. Clark, of the Advocates' Library, we are enabled to give the following selections from Wilkie's *Fables*.

THE HARE AND THE PARTAN.¹

A canny man will scarce provoke
 Ae creature livin', for a joke ;
 For be they weak or be they strang
 A jibe leaves after it a stang
 To mak' them think on't ; and a laird
 May find a beggar sae prepared
 Wi' pawks² and wiles, whaur pith is wantin',
 As soon will mak' him rue his tauntin'.

Ye hae my moral—if I'm able
 I'll fit it nicely wi' a fable.
 A Hare, ae mornin', chanced to see
 A Partan creepin' on a lee :
 A fishwife wha was early oot
 Had drapt the creature thereaboot.
 Mawkin³ bumbased⁴ and frichted sair
 To see a thing but⁵ hide and hair
 Which, if it stirred not, might be ta'en
 For naething ither than a stane.
 A squint wife, wamblin',⁶ sair beset
 Wi' gerse and rashes like a net,
 First thocht to rin for't ; (for by kind
 A Hare's nae fechter ye maun mind)
 But seein' that wi' a' its strength
 It scarce could creep a tether length
 The Hare grew baulder and cam' near,
 Turned playsome, and forgat her fear.
 Quoth Mawkin, " Was there e'er in nature
 Sae feckless and sae puir a creature ?

¹ The Crab. ² Stratagems. ³ Cant name for a hare.

⁴ Astonished. ⁵ Without. ⁶ A squint-eyed, wobbling wife.

It scarcely kens, or I'm mista'en,
 The way to gang or stand its lane.
 See how it steitters¹: I'll be bund
 To rin a mile o' uphill grund
 Before it gets a rig-braid frae
 The place it's in, though doon the brae."

Mawkin wi' this began to frisk,
 And, thinkin' there was little risk,
 Clapt baith her feet on Partan's back,
 And turned him awald² in a crack.
 To see the creature sprawl, her sport
 Grew twice as good, yet proved but short,
 For, pattin' wi' her feet in play
 Just whaur the Partan's nippers lay,
 He gript it fast, which made her squeal
 And think she bourded³ wi' the deil.
 She strave to rin and made a fistle⁴;
 The tither caughted a tough burr thrissle
 Which held them baith, till o'er a dyke
 A herd cam' stendin'⁵ wi' his tyke⁶
 And felled puir Mawkin, sairly ruein'
 When forced to drink o' her ain brewin'.

THE MUSE AND THE SHEPHERD.

Let every bard who seeks applause
 Be true to virtue and her cause,
 Nor ever try to raise his fame
 By praising that which merits blame;
 The vain attempt he needs must rue,
 For disappointment will ensue.
 Virtue with her superior charms
 Exalts the poet's soul and warms,

¹ Walks in a weak, stumbling way. ² Topsy-turvy.

³ Played roughly. ⁴ Noisy struggle. ⁵ Leaping. ⁶ Dog.

His taste refines, his genius fires,
Like Phœbus and the Nine inspires ;
While Vice, tho' seemingly approved,
Is coldly flattered, never loved.
Palenion once a story told
Which by conjecture must be old :
I have a kind of half conviction
That at the best 'tis but a fiction ;
But taken right and understood,
The moral certainly is good.

A shepherd swain was wont to sing
The infant beauties of the spring,
The bloom of summer, winter hoar,
The autumn rich in various store ;
And praised in numbers strong and clear
The Ruler of the changeful year.
To human themes he'd next descend,
The shepherd's harmless life commend,
And prove him happier than the great
With all their pageantry and state :
Who oft for pleasure and for wealth
Exchange their innocence and health :
The Muses listened to his lays
And crowned him as he sung with bays.
Euterpe, goddess of the lyre
A harp bestowed with golden wire :
And oft would teach him how to sing,
Or touch with art the trembling string.
His fame o'er all the mountains flew,
And to his cot the shepherds drew ;
They heard his music with delight
Whole summer days from morn till night :
Nor did they ever think him long,
Such was the magic of his song :
Some rural present each prepared
His skill to honour and reward --
A flute, a sheep-hook, or a lamb,
Or kidling followed by its dam :

For bards, it seems, in earlier days
 Got something more than empty praise.
 All this continued for a while,
 But soon our songster changed his style,
 Infected with the common itch,
 His gains to double and grow rich :
 Or fondly seeking new applause,
 Or this or t'other was the cause.
 One thing is certain, that his rhymes
 Grew more obsequious to the times,
 Less stiff and formal, altered quite
 To what a courtier calls polite.
 Whoe'er grew rich by right or wrong
 Became the hero of a song.
 Astonished at a change so great
 No more the shepherds sought his seat,
 But in their place a hornèd crowd
 Of Satyrs flocked from every wood,
 Drawn by the magic of his lay
 To dance, to frolic, sport and play.
 The goddess of the lyre disdained
 To see her sacred gift profaned,
 And, gliding swiftly to the place
 With indignation in her face,
 The trembling shepherd thus addressed,
 In awful majesty confessed :—
 “Thou wretched fool, that harp resign,
 For know it is no longer thine.
 It was not given you to inspire
 A herd like this with loose desire,
 Nor to assist that venal praise
 Which vice may purchase if it pays :
 Such offices my lyre disgrace,
 Here, take this bagpipe in its place,
 'Tis fitter far, believe it true,
 Both for these miscreants and you.”
 The swain, dismayed, without a word
 Submitted, and the harp restored.

THE CROW AND THE OTHER BIRDS.

Containing a useful hint to the Critics.

In ancient times, tradition says,
 When Birds like men would strive for praise,
 The bullfinch, nightingale, and thrush,
 With all that chant from tree or bush,
 Would often meet in song to vie,—
 The kinds that sing not sitting by.
 A knavish Crow, it seems, had got
 The knack to criticise by rote.
 He understood each learned phrase
 As well as Critics now-a-days :
 Some say he learned them from an owl
 By list'ning where he taught a school.
 'Tis strange to tell this subtle creature,
 Though nothing musical by nature,
 Had learned so well to play his part
 With nonsense couched in terms of art
 As to be owned by all at last
 Director of the public taste.
 Then, puffed with insolence and pride
 And sure of numbers on his side,
 Each song he freely criticised—
 What he approved not was despised ;
 But one false step in evil hour
 For ever stript him of his power.
 Once, when the Birds assembled sat
 All list'ning to his formal chat,
 By instinct nice he chanced to find
 A cloud approaching in the wind,
 And—Ravens hardly can refrain
 From croaking when they think of rain—
 His wonted song he sung : the blunder
 Amazed and scared them worse than thunder,
 For no one thought so harsh a note
 Could ever sound from any throat.

They all at first with mute surprise
Each on his neighbour turned his eyes ;
But scorn succeeding soon took place,
And might be read in every face :
All this the Raven saw with pain
And strove his credit to regain.

Quoth he, " The solo which ye heard
In public should not have appeared—
The trifle of an idle hour
To please my mistress once when sour :
My voice, that's somewhat rough and strong,
Might chance the melody to wrong ;
But, tried by rules, you'll find the grounds
Most perfect and harmonious sounda."
He reasoned thus ; but to his trouble
At every word the laugh grew double ;
At last, o'ercome with shame and spite,
He flew away quite out of sight.

MRS DUGALD STEWART.

1765-1838.

HELEN D'ARCY CRANSTOUN was the third daughter of the Hon. George Cranstoun, youngest son of William, fifth Lord Cranstoun (*Douglas's Peerage* by Wood). She was born in the year 1765, and on the 26th July, 1790, became the wife of Dugald Stewart, the celebrated Professor of Moral Philosophy in the University of Edinburgh. They resided at Catrine, Ayrshire, for many years, and became the friends of Robert Burns, who, in a letter to Dr Mackenzie of Mauchline, thus gives his impressions of the Professor:—"I never spent an afternoon among great folks with half that pleasure as when, in company with you, I had the honour of paying my devoirs to that plain, honest, worthy man, the Professor. I would be delighted to see him perform acts of kindness and friendship, though I were not the object; he does it with such a grace. I think his character, divided into ten parts, stands thus,—four parts Socrates, four parts Nathaniel, and two parts Shakespeare's Brutus."

In 1809 Stewart relinquished the active duties of the professorial chair, and removed to Kinneil House, near Bo'ness. Here the remainder of their married life was spent, and Mrs Stewart continued to live at Kinneil with her daughter after her husband's decease in 1828. Shortly before her death, which took place on 28th July, 1838, she removed her residence to Warristoun House, near Edinburgh, where she died at the age of 73. She was a lady

celebrated for her beauty and accomplishments, and was a brilliant figure in the society of Edinburgh, which at that particular period was the centre of the intellectual and fashionable world. Professor Thomas Brown, the distinguished successor of her husband in the Moral Philosophy chair, has some verses addressed to her of which we may quote two stanzas -

“Thou nameless loveliness, whose mind,
With every grace to soothe, to warm,
Has lavish Nature blessed, and 'shrined
The sweetness in as soft a form.

“Thy smile so soft, thy heart so kind,
Thy voice for pity's tones so fit,
All speak thee woman; but thy mind
Lifts thee where Bards and Sages sit.”

The song by which Mrs Stewart is known to fame—*The tears I shed*—was first published in the fourth volume of Johnson's *Scots Musical Museum* in 1792. It is there adapted to the air “*Ianthe the lovely*,” the composition of John Barret, an old English musician. Burns acquaints us that the song wanted four lines to suit the music, and that for this purpose he added the first four lines of the last verse. In the index to the *Museum* he terms it “This song of genius,” and though we are aware that he was sometimes apt to be lavishly extravagant in his praise of songs that pleased him, this, at least, is not unworthy of the encomium he bestowed on it. The second specimen of her talents which we give appears in Laing's *Additional Illustrations of the Lyric Poetry and Music of Scotland*, and breathes, in graceful language, the same strain of tender feeling which characterises her more famous

production. So far as we can ascertain Mrs Stewart's poetical efforts were confined to these two songs, which are sufficiently chaste and tender in expression to give her a place amongst that sweet sisterhood of song to which Scotland is indebted for some of her finest lyrics.

THE TEARS I SHED MUST EVER FALL.

The tears I shed must ever fall :
I mourn not for an absent swain ;
For thoughts may past delights recall,
And parted lovers meet again.
I weep not for the silent dead :
Their toils are past, their sorrows o'er ;
And those they loved their steps shall tread,
And death shall join to part no more.

Though boundless oceans roll between,
If certain that his heart is near,
A conscious transport glads each scene,
Soft is the sigh, and sweet the tear.
E'en when by death's cold hand removed,
We mourn the tenant of the tomb :
To think that e'en in death he loved
Can gild the horrors of the tomb.

But bitter, bitter are the tears
Of her who slighted love bewails ;
No hope her dreary prospect cheers,
No pleasing melancholy hails.
Hers are the pangs of wounded pride,
Of blasted hope, of withered joy ;
The flatt'ring veil is rent aside,
The flame of love burns to destroy.

In vain does memory renew
The hours once tinged in transport's dye :
The sad reverse soon starts to view,
And turns the past to agony.

E'en time itself despairs to cure
Those pangs to every feeling due :
Ungenerous youth ! thy boast how poor !
To win a heart,—and break it too.

No cold approach, no altered mien,
Just what would make suspicion start ;
No pause the dire extremes between,
He made me blest—and broke my heart.
From hope, the wretched's anchor, torn ;
Neglected and neglecting all ;
Friendless, forsaken, and forlorn ;
The tears I shed must ever fall.

RETURNING SPRING WITH GLADSOME RAY.

Returning Spring, with gladsome ray,
Adorns the earth and smooths the deep ;
All Nature smiles serene and gay,
It smiles, and yet, alas ! I weep.

But why, why flows the sudden tear,
Since Heaven such precious boons has lent,
The lives of those who life endear,
And though scarce competence—content ?

Sure when no other bliss was mine
Than that which still kind Heaven bestows,
Yet then could peace and hope combine
To promise joy and give repose.

Then have I wandered o'er the plain,
And blessed each flower that met my view ;
Thought Fancy's power would ever reign,
And Nature's charms be ever new.

I fondly thought where Virtue dwelt
That happy bosom knew no ill,
That those who scorned me time would melt,
And those I loved be faultless still.

Enchanting dreams, kind was your art
That bliss bestowed without alloy ;
Or if soft sadness claimed a part,
’Twas sadness sweeter still than joy.

Oh ! whence the change that now alarms,
Fills this sad heart and tearful eye :
And conquers the once powerful charms
Of Youth, of Hope, of Novelty ?

’Tis sad Experience, fatal power,
That clouds the once illumined sky,
That darkens life’s meridian hour,
And bids each fairy vision fly.

She paints the scene, how different far
From that which youthful fancy drew ;
Shows joy and prudence oft at war,
Our woes increased, our comforts few.

And when, perhaps, on some loved friend
Our treasured fondness we bestow,
Oh ! can she not, with ruthless hand,
Change even that friend into a foe ?

See in her train cold Foresight move,
Shunning the rose to ’scape the thorn,
And Prudence every fear approve,
And Pity harden into scorn.

The glowing tints of Fancy fade,
Life’s distant prospects charm no more ;
Alas ! are all my hopes betrayed ?
Can nought my happiness restore ?

Relentless power, at length be just,
Thy better skill alone impart ;
Give caution, but withhold distrust,
And guard, but harden not my heart.

JOHN WATT.

1770(?)–1844.

JOHN WATT, schoolmaster of the parish of Livingston for a long number of years, was born about the year 1770, and died in 1844. In 1834 he published *Poems in the Scotch and English Dialect*: a duodecimo volume of 120 pages. With three or four exceptions the poems treat of the Reform Bill and the stirring incidents that made the election preceding the passing of that measure so memorable. Watt appears to have been an ardent reformer, and, in consequence, his little book is “Dedicated to the Honourable Worthies that have stood firmly forward in the cause of freedom”; the county champions of which were

“A Rosebery, Gillon, Dalmeny, Hope Vere.”

His verse consists chiefly of political lampoons, which, however well they may serve the purpose of the hour, have generally little to recommend them to posterity. Like Goldsmith’s *Parish Schoolmaster*, “many a joke had he,” and humorous anecdotes of his career are still current among the older generation; but, like that same worthy,

“Past is all his fame: the very spot
Where many a time he triumphed is forgot.”

To James Crowe, Esq., Livingston, who treasures a copy of his old schoolmaster’s poems—probably the only one in existence—we are indebted for a perusal of the work, from which we are enabled to give these two specimens of

Watt's powers outside of the political arena where, like Ebenezer Elliott, his muse found her native element in the seething sea of reform, and amid the whirlwind of party strife.

THE DRUNKARD.

He wha daily o'er his bottle
Tipples till he's beastly fou
Murders wit, embezzles reason,
Cash an' credit gallops through.

Strength an' breeding tyne their mainspring,
Truth, fine feelings, crippled sair,
Social friendship tynes its balance,
Swees, or yields to black despair.

Conscience an' religion drouket,
Common sense the reins does quit,
Love an' kindness are bambousel'd,
Knowledge, huffed, betakes to flight.

Friends an' kindred, wives an' sweethearts,
Driven from the fond embrace ;
Home, that garden fraught with pleasure,
Charmless, turns a loathsome place.

Every feeling's drowned or daver't,
Virtue's fortress strippet bare,
A' its towers an' bulwarks level'd,
Not one sentry planted there.

Lust, rage, malice,—Satan's minions—
Unrestrained, usurp the power ;
Plant their standards, frame their counsels,
Faith an' grace's troops devour :

Self-will acts as chief commander,
Loose tongue's master o' the mess,
Impudence the burgomaster,
Quarrelsome lifter o' the cess.

Infamy's made standard-bearer,
 Insolence the gates does guard,
 Unsound reason is made chaplain :
 Is such a wretch for death prepared ?

ARDENT SPIRITS.

Yae gill's enough, be't cheap or dear,
 To brace the nerves, set wit asteer,
 Arouse the sense, the judgment clear
 Full length pourtray ;
 Man's love or hate, friendship or fear,
 Real worth display.

Twa maks the tongue an' wit mair fleet,
 Mair sly wi' gumption guid to meet,
 Love's flame may burke, or heedless beat
 Discretion blin' ;
 Gi'es slander wings, an' falsehood feet,
 To flee an' rin.

A third, sense, wit, an' worth devours,
 Discord exalts, reason o'erpowers,
 Presumption like great giant lowers,
 Or hero brave ;
 The finest feeling hirklin cowers
 Like traitor knave.

A fourth distorts the senses a',
 Begunks the wit, lets breedin' fa',
 Discretion's hunted clean awa',
 The brain wheels roun',
 The legs at logger-heids soon fa',
 Ding ither down.

Then man grows fleet, wise, unco strang,
 Far, far 'yond fear, or ought that's wrang,
 The best advice can ne'er belang
 To ane like him ;
 Ca' him but fou, he'll swear ye're wrang,
 Tho' to the brim.

Proffer a bed or a lift hame
His fury rises like a flame,
“ Am I that fou ? ” wildly exclaim—
How queer to see ’t :
Tho’ as unfit as horse deid-lame
To keep his feet.

Joints grow sae filch, slim, powerless a’,
They winna play their part ava ;
For ilk step on aside stoits twa,
Or aiblins back,
Till wi’ a souce o’er he gaes a’,
On face or back.

Tho’ there laid o’er like ane half deid,
Mayhap feet higher than his heid,
E’en yet will neither drive nor lead,
Advice tak’ na ;
Nor will he e’en tak’ wi’ the deed
That he did fa’.

An’ the neist morn, tho’ een be ruddy,
Guid claes frae tap to tail soiled muddy,
He ’ll obdurate as ony cuddy
Deny it a’,
Affirming, tho’ the mind be muddy,
It ’s falsehood a’.

WILLIAM BROCK.

1793-1855.

WILLIAM BROCK is one of those "one-song" bards who, without claiming to be poets, have nevertheless an abiding place in the lyric literature of Scotland through the merit of a single effusion which found its birth in the glowing heat of an hour's enthusiasm or inspiration.

He was born at Eastertoun, near Armadale, in the year 1793. On attaining to manhood he became tenant of the farm of Barbauchlaw Mains, where he resided till his death on 19th June, 1855. He was an intelligent farmer of the old school, of a genial disposition, and upright, sterling integrity. By his wife, Marion Gardner, he had a large family, several of whom still survive, though all have removed from the district. For the preservation of the whole of this pawky bit of lyric humour we are indebted to Mrs Orr of Spring Grove, to whose retentive memory we had successful recourse after a search in which we could only recover the first and last verses. This song was a great favourite with the late Thomas Whitelaw, from whose singing Mrs Orr learned it. We have pleasure in giving it as a memorial of "the black hairst" of 1817; all the more so that it here makes its appearance "in guid, black prent" for the first time.

FROST IN THE MORNIN'.

I'm sùre ye 'll ha'e heard o' the year seventeen,
When the frost o' October set in very keen ;
The maist o' oor muirland craps then bein' green
Were ruined by three o' thae mornin's.

An' after the frost an' the snaw gaed awa',
The rain it cam' on like to ruin us a' ;
It lasted sae lang that it shortened oor straw,
Which added mair dule to oor mornin'.

But besides a' this a scheme I had laid ;
I had promised to wed wi' a beautiful maid,
To share o' the owercome when a'thing was paid,
But was baffled wi' frost in the mornin'.

Noo since my wee crap is a' snug in the yaird,
An' still for the lassie I ha'e a regaird,
I think I will wed her an' no pay the laird—
Let him ken it was frost in the mornin' !

WILLIAM CAMERON.

1801-1877.

WILLIAM CAMERON, to whom we are indebted for so many fine lyrics, was born at Dunipace, Stirlingshire, on the 3rd of December, 1801, and there his early years were spent. It was originally intended to educate him for the ministry, and towards this end he had made considerable progress in his studies in divinity; but the death of his father, while William was but seventeen years of age, interfered materially with his prospects. He ultimately abandoned all thoughts of entering the church, and betook himself to the less lucrative but none the less honourable profession of teaching. In 1826 he received the appointment of teacher at Armadale, where he remained for over ten years. What his success as a teacher was we cannot tell at this distance of time; but he certainly impressed his scholars and others who knew him with the gentleness and kindness of his disposition. The ever lessening number of the members of that circle who came under his influence still love and honour his name, and speak of "gentle Willie Cameron" in terms of glowing admiration and praise. Amid the beauties of Birkenshaw and the surroundings of "that sweet rural spot" the inspiration of the poet came upon him, and he sang of "Jessie o' the Dell" and "Sweet Birkenshaw" in songs that will never die.

In 1836 he quitted his situation in Armadale and removed to Glasgow, where he did business in various kinds of merchandise till his death in 1877.

Some of his finest songs, *e.g.*, *Jessie o' the Dell*, *Morag's Faery Glen*, *Meet me on the Gowan Lea*, &c., were set to music by Matthew Wilson, while his *Bothwell Castle* has been wedded to an equally beautiful air by Nathaniel Gow, the youngest son of "famous Neil."¹

Cameron's songs are all characterised by a felicity and a tenderness of poetic expression that place him very high on the list of Scotland's famous song-writers, and of him it may be appropriately said that

"While Song is loved, and Nature's beauties all
Have a responsive homage from the heart,
So shall the beauty of his winning Muse
Be loved, and so admired."

SWEET JESSIE O' THE DELL.

O bright the beaming queen o' night
Shines in yon flowery vale,
And softly sheds her silver light
O'er mountain-path and dale :
Short is the way when light 's the heart
That 's bound in love's soft spell ;
Sae I 'll awa' to Armadale
To Jessie o' the Dell.
To Jessie o' the Dell,
Sweet Jessie o' the Dell,
The bonnie lass o' Armadale,
Sweet Jessie o' the Dell.

We've pu'd the primrose on the braes
Beside my Jessie's cot ;
We've gathered nuts, we've gathered slaes
In that sweet rural spot.

¹ *Vide* Baptie's *Musical Scotland*, p. 68.

The wee short hours danced merrily,
Like lambkins on the fell,
As if they join'd in joy wi' me
And Jessie o' the Dell.
Sweet Jessie o' the Dell, &c.

There 's nane to me wi' her can vie,
I'll love her till I dee ;
For she's sae sweet and bonnie aye,
And kind as kind can be.
This night in mutual kind embrace,
O wha our joys can tell !
Then I'll awa' to Armadale
To Jessie o' the Dell.
Sweet Jessie o' the Dell, &c.

MY WILLIE AN' ME.

As wand'ring my lane doon by sweet Birkenshaw,
An' thinkin' on days that are noo gane awa',
I noticed twa couthie wee birds on a tree,
Thinks I, Noo that's unco like Willie an' me.
They lilted about, an' sae blithely they sang,
They fluttered an' courted, I kenna hoo lang ;
My heart was as happy an' fu' as could be,
They minded me sae o' my Willie an' me.

I wondered if a' the wee birds o' the dell
As kindly an' fondly their love-tales could tell ;
I wondered if ony twa mortals could be
As happy an' leal as my Willie an' me.
They a' may be happy,—what for should they no ?
An' lasses fu' meikle may think o' their jo ;
But naething on earth, in the air, or the sea,
Can be half sae happy as Willie an' me.

My Willie is guid, an' my Willie's sae kin',
 An' then, O thank Heaven, dear Willie is mine !
 In the joy o' my heart the tear draps frae my e'e
 To think we're sae happy, my Willie an' me.
 The hero may sigh for mair laurels—the loon !
 The tyrant may grasp at a kingdom or croon ;
 Contented an' happy I'd live till I dee,
 Tho' they tak' a' the warld but my Willie frae me.

WILL YE GANG TO THE BAUGYBURN ?

Will ye gang to the Baugyburn,
 Mary, Mary ?
 O gang wi' me to Baugyburn,
 My ain dear dawtie Mary.

The burnie aye still jumps an' jouks,
 Whaur 'mang its flow'ry, shady nooks
 O mony a fair wee flow'rie dooks
 Its sweet face in the streamie.

The woodland warbler still is there,
 Health floating in the balmy air,
 An' a' is fresh, an' a' is fair,
 As there when first I woo'd thee.

It's no for a' its beauties rare,
 But just because we courted there ;
 An' noo for twenty years an' mair
 You've been my ain dear dawtie.

We'll twine a wreath o' bonnie flowers,
 We'll talk o' auld langsyne for hours,
 While high aboon the laverock pours
 Its sang o' love an' Mary.

O DINNA CROSS THE BURN, WILLIE.

O dinna cross the burn, Willie,
Willie, dinna cross the burn ;
For big's the spate, and loud it roars,
O dinna cross the burn !
Your folks a' ken you're here the nicht,
And sair they would me blame :
Sae bide wi' me till mornin' licht—
Indeed ye're no gaun hame.

O bide, dear Willie, here the nicht--
O bide till mornin' here :
Your faither he'll see a' things richt,
And you'll hae nocht to fear.
Sae dark the lift, nae moon is there,
The rain in torrents pours—
Ah ! see the lightnin's dreadfu' glare !
Hear how the thunder roars !

Awa' he rode, nae kindness could
His wild resolve o'erturn,
He plunged into the foaming flood,
But never cross'd the burn :
And noo, tho' ten lang years hae passed
Since that wild storm blew by,
Ah ! still the maniac hears the blast,
And still the crazy cry :
O dinna cross the burn, Willie,
Willie, dinna cross the burn ;
For big's the spate and loud it roars,
O dinna cross the burn !

MORAG'S FAERY GLEN.

D'ye ken whaur yon wee burnie, love,
Rins roarin' to the sea,
And tumbles o'er its rocky bed
Like spirit wild and free ?

The mellow mavis tunes his lay,
 The blackbird swells his note,
 And little robin sweetly sings
 Above the woody grot.
 Then meet me, love, by a' unseen,
 Beside yon mossy den ;
 Oh, meet me, love, at dewy eve,
 In Morag's Faery Glen.

Come when the sun in robes of gold
 Sinks o'er yon hills to rest,
 And fragrance floating in the breeze
 Comes frae the dewy west ;
 And I will pu' a garland gay
 To deck thy brow sae fair,
 For many a woodbine covered glade
 And sweet wild flower is there.

There's music in the wild cascade,
 There's love among the trees,
 There's beauty in ilk bank and brae,
 And balm upon the breeze ;
 There's a' of nature and of art
 That maistly weel could be,
 And, oh ! my love, when thou art there
 There's bliss in store for me.

MEET ME ON THE GOWAN LEA.

Meet me on the gowan lea,
 Bonnie Mary, sweetest Mary ;
 Meet me on the gowan lea,
 My ain, my artless Mary.

Before the sun sink in the west
 And nature a' has gane to rest,
 There to my fond, my faithfu' breast,
 O let me clasp my Mary.

The gladsome lark o'er moor and fell,
The lintie in the bosky dell,
Nae blither than your bonnie sel',
My ain, my artless Mary.

We'll join our love-notes to the breeze
That sighs in whispers through the trees,
And a' that twa fond hearts can please
Will be our sang, my Mary.

There ye shall sing the sun to rest,
While to my faithfu' bosom pressed,
Then wha sae happy, wha sae blest
As me and my dear Mary?

SIR JAMES YOUNG SIMPSON.

1811-1870.

JAMES YOUNG SIMPSON was born at Bathgate on the 7th of June, 1811. His father followed the trade of a baker there, and James was the youngest of a family of eight—seven boys and a girl. At the time of his birth the little baking business was not in a very flourishing condition: his father was of an easy-going disposition, which was, however, more than compensated for by the energy and industry of the mother. Mrs Simpson appears to have been a pious woman with a liberal endowment of shrewd common-sense and business capacity, yet withal a kind and fond woman of the home. The world is more indebted to such mothers than it can ever repay or even know. While her boy was only nine years of age she died; but her memory and influence were sacredly treasured in the boy's heart, and they continued to be a power for good throughout his whole life. Dr Duns in his admirable memoir relates an interesting incident on this subject:—"When in the height of his fame I heard a lady tell him of an industrial school for girls which she had set up in a little village near Bathgate. 'And what does your schoolmistress teach the girls?' he asked. 'Some fancy work,' was the answer, 'and plenty of plain sewing and darning.' Shortly after, he said to me, 'Do you know, the mention of darning a little while ago recalls a very, very old and precious memory? One day, when a child, I came into the house with a big hole in the heel of my

stocking, and my mother set me on her knee, darned the stocking, and, as she drew it on, said, "My Jamie, when your mother's away, you will mind that she was a grand darning." I remember the words as if they had been spoken yesterday. I would like to give a prize to the best darning in the school."

His only sister Mary was now the manager of the home and filled up the blank in the boy's life as well as she possibly could. These two were warmly attached to each other. Before and after school hours the baker's laddie went his rounds with the "brod" dispensing scones and "baps" to his father's customers. At school he was of a "steerin'" disposition—qualified to hold his own alike in the playground and the class-room. He was remarkable for the possession of a very tenacious memory, and won for himself the golden opinions of his dominie, who discerned in young Simpson the promise of future greatness. His own brothers and sister were equally proud of his talent and, much to their credit, clubbed together for the purpose of paying his expenses at Edinburgh University. There, in his third session, he secured a bursary by which he was enabled to complete his medical course without further encroachment on the family generosity. During the first two sessions he kept an exact account of his expenses, which, at the end of each term, he submitted to the family council. Some of these entries are very amusing in their associations. For instance we find "vegetables" and "Byron's 'Beauties'" tabulated together: "Finnan Haddies, 2d., and 'Bones of the Leg,' £1 1s." look well together; while "snuff, 1½d.," is sandwiched between "Duncan's 'Therapeutics,' 9d.," and "'Early Rising,' 9½d."—with the evident purpose of imparting relish and seasoning

to otherwise dry subjects. His attic cost him three shillings per week, and we learn that after prosecuting his studies till far into the morning he was accustomed to prepare for enjoying slumber by writing a few verses of comic poetry! Surely seldom has the comic muse been invoked under more inauspicious circumstances, and it is matter for some regret that none of these ultra-midnight effusions has survived the subsequent wear and tear of a busy life. In 1832 he graduated M.D., his thesis on Death from Inflammation receiving the special notice of Thomson, Professor of Pathology, to whom during 1837-38 he acted as assistant. Professor Thomson employed him in the preparation of his course of lectures on General Pathology, and during the professor's illness Dr Simpson supplied his place in the lecture-room with unusual ability. In 1835 he visited London and the Continent, and on his return journey north halted at Liverpool, where he fell in love with Miss Grindlay, the daughter of his host, who afterwards became his help-meet in the truest sense of the word. The most of his love-letters are dated at one, two, and three o'clock in the morning, so that there is every reason to believe that he was very much in love indeed.

He had always had a special inclination towards Obstetrics, and as an extra-mural lecturer on this subject his thoughtful and ingenious lectures were attended with distinguished success. The Chair of Midwifery becoming vacant in 1840, he succeeded Professor Hamilton in this onerous position, and entered on its responsibilities with characteristic energy. His reputation was such that patients crowded to his consulting room from all parts of the country. Fortunately he was blessed with a splendid constitution and a genuine love for his profession, else he

must inevitably have given way under the strain of his arduous duties.

“ His heart was in the work, and the heart
Lendeth grace to every art.”

And truly the branch of his profession to which he had devoted himself with his whole soul, required all the ameliorating influences of his science which skill and research could procure.

Mr Moody, the American evangelist, once remarked that the energetic business men of Chicago were the men who seemed to find opportunities of doing most religious and charitable work; the reason being that their business capacity enabled them to take advantage of the spare moments of life. This observation is very applicable to Professor Simpson. When the Disruption took place in 1843 he was one of the many able men who “came out,” as it was termed, and formed the Free Church of Scotland. Like Hugh Miller he championed the infant church with pen and voice, and remained to the day of his death an enthusiast in all that pertained to its welfare.

But it is as the discoverer of chloroform that Professor Simpson's name will be for ever recorded in the annals of fame. This substance, which is chemically known as CHCl_3 , is composed of 12 parts of carbon, 1 part of hydrogen, and $106\frac{1}{2}$ parts of chlorine. Some sort of decoction for producing insensibility to pain must have been in existence in ancient times, for it continually crops up in ancient records and traditions. Hemp appears to have been employed in many instances for this purpose; but

“ Not poppy, nor mandragora,
Nor all the drowsy syrups of the world ”

have secured for suffering humanity the power to defy pain in its most torturing aspects so effectually as the anæsthetic substance known as chloroform. For many years before its discovery Professor Simpson experimented almost continually. Some discoveries are made quite accidentally ; but those to which the world owes most have not been "attained by sudden flight" or the whirligig of a lucky chance, but by years of patient toil and tireless perseverance. Moreover, the experiments were of a dangerous nature necessarily, and on some occasions alarmed the household by their consequences. Once the Professor was unconscious for several hours, and at another time carried the obnoxious smell of coal-gas about with him for several days. But the mind of Simpson was not one to be easily deterred from the prosecution of his researches by such uncomfortable incidents, and the successful use of sulphuric ether by a dentist in America named Morton acted as an additional stimulus ; if, indeed, any such incitement were needed where the whole forces of a giant intellect were bent on this one subject. At last, in the summer of 1847, the zeal and dangers of years were fully compensated for in the fruition of research and experiment—the great discovery was made. On this particular occasion several doctors, who had all along aided and encouraged him in his investigations, were assembled at his house—Mrs Simpson and another lady being also present. The Professor poured a dark fluid into each glass which they heated over boiling water. The experimenters began to talk in a brilliant manner, enchanting the hearers ; then dropped down on the floor. Success had come at last, and life had been extracted from the very jaws of death. Throughout the world, but more especially in scientific

circles, the result was greeted with enthusiasm, and the adoption of the discovery was almost universal in a short time,—Her Majesty being among the first to use it at her confinement. There was some professional jealousy as well as clerical rancour aroused by narrow-minded people on the subject; but the Professor's pen was a match for them all, and the fit of prejudice soon subsided. Honours were now practically showered on the famous Professor. The French Academy of Sciences awarded him a prize of 2,000 francs "for a most important benefit done to humanity": the French Academy of Medicine elected him a Foreign Associate: the King of Sweden conferred the royal order of Knighthood of St. Olaf on him; and honours *ad infinitum* were poured on him from all quarters of the globe. He was appointed one of Her Majesty's Physicians for Scotland in 1847; in 1854 he was knighted, and he was made a Baronet in 1866, when he took for his motto, "Victo Dolore" (Pain Overcome). Though he had thus early reached the pinnacle of fame, this did not induce him to cease the prosecution of those researches which had brought him so much success. He continued to work as hard as ever, and the fruits of his indefatigable and ingenious investigations are embodied in *Obstetric Memoirs* which were edited by Drs Priestly and Storrer, and published in two volumes in 1856. Of antiquarian lore he was an interested student and unflagging enthusiast, and he was a member of the Society of Scottish Antiquarians, of which he eventually became president. In archæology he was also deeply versed. His researches in this direction are contained in his posthumous *Archæological Essays* (1872); and he wrote with authority on many subjects of antiquarian interest. The establishment of Cottage Hospitals

throughout Scotland was due in large measure to his earnest advocacy, and kindly yet energetic interest. His voice and pen seemed ever at the call of any good and charitable object, and such was his zeal and fervour that the appeal was never made in vain. Like many others of our great-minded, great-hearted men, he was kindness and gentleness itself, with a touch of that child-like simplicity in his nature that seems to be inseparably associated with nobility of mind. To wee Jamie, his delicate, lame son, he was passionately attached. For his amusement many an hour was spent by the Professor in devising anything that might brighten his life. The heart of the father seemed to cling to the puny, pale child with more than human affection, and when the Reaper came for the hairn the heart of the father was changed. Writing of this sad event to a friend, he says—"Jamie became a changed boy for many months before he died, and perhaps he was one of the great means why my whole household has seemed changed to me." From that time forward the Baronet consecrated himself more and more to deeds of benevolence and words of love. In this manner were spent the concluding years of a noble life,

"Till, like a clock worn out with beating time,
The weary wheels of life at last stood still."

Sir James died on the 6th of May, 1870, in his fifty-ninth year. An admirable *Memoir* of him was published in 1873 by Dr Duns, and in 1877 a bronze statue was erected to his memory in Edinburgh. Proud of his country, and proud of his humble birth, a benefactor of the whole human race, his name will ever be esteemed and himself revered as one of Scotland's noblest and greatest sons.

In the various memoirs references are made with regard to his occasional indulgence in versification ; but his little poem *Stop and think of another Life*, which was written at Geneva in 1866, is all that can be definitely assigned to him. The second specimen which we give was found amongst letters from Sir James to a friend, and though his friends have frequently heard him quote from it, still it cannot be claimed for him with any degree of certainty.

STOP AND THINK OF ANOTHER LIFE.

Oft 'mid this world's ceaseless strife,
When flesh and spirit fail me,
I stop, and think of another life
Where ills can ne'er assail me :
Where my wearied arm shall cease its fight.
My heart shall cease its sorrow,
And this dark night change for the light
Of an everlasting morrow.

On earth below there's nought but woe,
E'en mirth is gilded sadness ;
But in heaven above there's nought but love,
With all its raptured gladness :
There, till I come, waits me a home
All human dreams excelling,
In which, at last, when life is past,
I'll find a regal dwelling.

Then shall be mine, through grace divine.
A rest that knows no ending,
Which my soul's eye would fain descry
Though still with clay 'tis blending :
And, Saviour dear, while I tarry here
Where a Father's love hath found me.
Oh ! let me feel, through woe and weal,
Thy guardian arm around me.

ONLY A DROP IN A BUCKET.

Only a drop in a bucket,
But every drop will tell ;
The bucket would soon be empty
Without the drops in the well.

Only a poor little penny,
It was all I had to give ;
But as pennies make the shillings
It may help some work to live.

A few little bits of ribbon,
And some toys—they were not new,
But they made the sick child happy,
Which made me happy too.

Only some out-grown garments,
They were all I had to spare ;
But they'll help to clothe the needy--
And the poor are everywhere.

A word now and then of comfort
That costs me little to say ;
But the poor old man died happy,
And it helped him on the way.

God loveth the cheerful giver
Though the gift be poor and small :
What doth He think of His children
When they never give at all ?

EBENEZER OLIPHANT.

1813-1893.

EBENEZER OLIPHANT was the third son of Ebenezer Oliphant, schoolmaster at Torphichen, where he was born on the 15th of September, 1813. His father was a native of Comrie, Perthshire, and claimed kinship with that staunch old Jacobite, Oliphant of Gask, the father of Lady Nairne. Ebenezer was educated at his father's school and acted as assistant teacher till he was twenty years of age, when he served his apprenticeship to the mason trade, which occupation he followed for twenty years in his native village.

His brother had for many years carried on business as a baker in Linlithgow, and on his removal to another part of the town our poet succeeded him. This business he successfully conducted for forty years, and it is now in the hands of his son and namesake.

He was of a genial and kindly disposition and was very highly respected in the wide circle of his friends and acquaintances. He was always in request at social gatherings where the latest *jeu d'esprit* of his muse was a welcome addition to the evening's enjoyment. Curling contained for him the very essence of life and pleasure, and on this subject he has written some of his best songs, generally composed on the ice during intervals of play. John Frost was his patron saint, and no saint in the calendar had ever such a devoted worshipper. To the last he retained a keen interest in Scotland's ain game, and the

first footprint of St. John on the hills was a signal for him to set his channel-stanes in order.

Surrounded by his family he passed peacefully away on the 2nd of May, 1893, in his eightieth year. Very few of his poems have been published as he was always very diffident in the matter of press publication, and it is through the kindness of his son already mentioned that we are enabled to give these specimens of his poetic ability.

TO A BRITHER CURLER.

I like weel to hear o' the keen game o' curlin'

Though grey is my hair noo an' craz'd are my banes,
For I min' sin' I cried like the Irishman's starlin',

"Will ye no let me oot wi' my besom and stanes?"

Whan auld John sat doun at the wast neuk o' Cockle,
An' his banner display'd a' the lads wi' their brooms,
If the game was for fun or the medal was local
Oor teeth never chittered at auld Jocey Hume's.

An' whan we crap south to the tap o' auld Tory,
Near the Cairnaple heid stood a wee mossy dam—
Nae clud thanadays cuist a gum ower oor glory,
For warm was oor welcome fae Charley an' Tam.

Oor curlin'-stane han's, there were some o' them wud than,
Wi' grey pockey faces, auld battle-scaured hides,
But oor sennans were screw'd up thro' Anakim blude than,
An' loud groan'd the Witch-craig wi' soun's fae their sides.

We faught till the sun sank far south fae Ben Lomond,
An' slow was the slaughter for dour was the yoke,
An' whane'er the first star strack its lamp i' the gloamin'
We campit a' nicht wi' a frien' at the Knock.

A pie i' the ase-hole was bakit there for us;
The chuckies we picket were naeboddy's kain,
An' the dew's o' Mounteerie they hoistit the chorus
Till the seven hills cried "that's the real auld Jock Bane."

By yon grey mould'rin' Fane some dear cronies are sleepin',
 An' some far adrift fae their dear native hame,
 An' though some remembrance to us may be creepin',
 They nae mair can mix in auld Scotland's ain game.

We micht hail some ance mair an' be happy thegither,
 An' roar roun' the tee by Ca'-law meadow burn,
 But will they come back through auld time's stormy weather?
 The days of our youth they can never return.

An' whiles I sigh sair ower the sad retrospection,
 As lanely I sit a half-stifed recluse,
 For maist a' the frien's o' my curlin' affection
 Are photograph'd only in memory's views.

Wi' them never mair will I slide on the ditches,
 Or skid down the Green on auld three-fitted stools,
 But they'll aye keep a stance in my heart's deepest niches,
 Till time haps me up wi' oblivion's mools.

LINES UNDER A PHOTOGRAPH.

We've often seen the partin' screen
 Drap wi' a sudden fa';
 An' frien's weel kent, we've seen them sent
 By slow degrees awa'.

But whan the dart may strike this heart
 Remains with the Unseen—
 Yet tak' this card wi' my regard,
 To shew we've Brithers been.

Gie it, dear sir, in frien'ship's beuk,
 Some vacant spat, I crave,
 That some kind e'e on it may leuk,
 Whan I rest in my grave.

For three score years an' something mair,
 My photograph bespeaks—
 Cauld winter's cranreuch's on my hair,
 An' time has pleugh'd my cheeks.

An' through my garrat windows noo,
 Life's lanely gloamin' steals ;
 But by that twilight I can view
 My sairworn cistern wheels.

For oh ! my shouther's bendin' fast,
 My stap has lost its pace,
 An' weel I ken death sune maun cast
 Its shadow ower my face.

But though my dust to dust be given,
 An' cold my silent heart—
 We meet again, I hope, in heaven,
 Whaur dear frien's never part.

Whan auld frien's gather roun' my bier—
 My much loved chosen few,
 Some ane perchance may drap a tear,
 An' breathe a saft Adieu !

An' whan ower me the mools descend—
 Though them I winna hear,
 They'll tell ye to keep near the Friend
 That keeps the course a' clear.

An' if ye rin a heavenward race,
 You'll reach a happy goal—
 That everlasting dwelling place,
 "The Palace of the Soul."

VERSES TO THOMAS HAMILTON, ESQ.,

Late of Cathlaw, now in Australia.

Whan memory taks a flicht
 In the silence o' the nicht,
 On the tap of Cairneypapple whiles I licht ;
 But I canna see the fules
 Wi' their besoms, stanes, an' shules,
 Nor the jilts that slade on stules wi' can'le licht.

I hae seen the silent moon
 On the curlers glow'rin' doun,
 Whan the channel-stanes were runnin' keen an' clear ;
 But, oh ! how few are left
 To tak' them by the heft,
 They are musterin' ilka year roun' the Queer.¹

An' I'll sune be sleepin' soun'
 Whaur my Brithers are laid doun,
 Wi' the bonnie grassy divots on my breast,
 Till the mighty trumpet's sound
 Shall tear up my little mound,
 An' I'll soar awa' to glory 'mang the blest.

Noo a lang an' last adieu
 To my Mother Club an' you ;
 May ye ne'er hae ony cause to mak' ye weep :
 Though ye've left auld Scotia's shore
 To return nevermore
 You micht ca' at Grey Torphichen through your sleep.

There within the silent grave
 Lie the noble, young an' brave,
 An' their narrow hames are scattered here an' there ;
 You may read upon their tombs
 They hae a' laid doun their brooms,
 An' we'll tak' them in oor òxters nevermair.

But the brume will grow as green,
 An' the ice will be as keen,
 An' Scotland's ain auld game will gang on ;
 An' though rotten are oor banes
 Ither han's will play oor stanes
 Whan we baith shall be alike forgot an' gone.

¹Torphichen Preceptory or Queer, an illustration of which adorns the title page of this volume, was the seat of the Knights of St. John of Jerusalem and was completed in the reign of Alexander II. Mr Oliphant here follows the spelling of Grose in his *Peregrinations*: Wyntown spells it *Quere*, while *Quhair* is adopted by some—all of which are variations of *Choir*.

A SOBER DOCTOR.

A sober Doctor, lang since deid,
When visitin' his tender flock,
Had ta'en some trouble in his heid—
His frien's ca'd it a stumblin'-block.

The day was dark wi' rain an' hail,
The wind it blew a perfect squall,
The Doctor, noo baith auld an' frail,
Had stachered into the canal.

A servant wi' a lang muck-hawk,
Whene'er he heard the dolefu' plunge,
Took little time to think or jauk,
But haurled ashore the dreepin' sponge.

He took him to his cosy hame,
An' there a rousin' fire was bleezin',
An' quickly cam' the kind auld dame
Wi' her warm han's his cauld anes squeezin'.

“ Oh ! bring some whisky here,” she cries,
“ An' mix't wi' water,” quo' the ledly :
The Doctor roared thro' groans an' sighs,
“ I've rowth o' water here already ! ”

JOHN CAMPBELL SHAIRP.

1819-1885.

JOHN CAMPBELL SHAIRP was born at Houstoun House, in the parish of Uphall, on the 30th day of July, 1819. He was the third son of Major Norman Shairp who, as an officer in the Indian army, saw much hard service, and took part in thirteen pitched battles; but retiring early from the service he settled down as a country gentleman at Houstoun—a property which has been in the possession of the Shairp family since the reign of Mary Queen of Scots. Young Shairp received the elements of his education at home under the tutorship of Mr Bell, of whom in after life he often spoke in terms of praise. He remained under the ancestral roof till at ten years of age he was sent with his brothers to the Edinburgh Academy where he spent the next four years in assiduous study, varied occasionally with pleasant vacations at home. Writing to his father from Oxford many years later he attributed his thoroughness to the Academy “where,” he said, “the basis of any scholarship I have was laid.” The succeeding winter was passed at Houstoun, and thereafter, in 1836, he proceeded to Glasgow University, which he attended for three sessions. It is to this period of his life that the first impulses of the poetic faculty are traceable, and here also he came under the influence of Wordsworth, at a time when to profess appreciation of the Lake poet in Scotland was tantamount to being considered a ninny: such influence did the Edinburgh reviewers possess over

the literature of the time. On leaving Glasgow Shairp passed another winter in Edinburgh from whence, in 1840, he proceeded as a Snell Exhibitioner to Balliol College, Oxford. Two years later he gained the Newdigate Prize for a poem on "Charles the Twelfth."

At Oxford he formed many distinguished friendships, the most notable of which was probably the brotherly regard of Arthur Hugh Clough—a poet of whom it has been said that he died with greater promise unfulfilled than any other Englishman since Keats. Cardinal Newman also exercised a beneficent influence over the young Scotsman, and afterwards became his firm friend.

At the age of twenty-seven Shairp was invited to become an assistant master in Rugby School, of which his friend Dr Tait was head-master. This he accepted, and there the next eleven years of his life were spent. He was a very successful master, and took a deep interest in the welfare of the boys under his charge—an interest not merely confined to the class-room ; but by reason of

" That best portion of a good man's life—
His little, nameless, unremembered acts
Of kindness and of love "

he is still honoured and loved by old Rugby scholars.

Despite the success with which he laboured at Rugby we can trace in his letters a longing for some post in the schools or universities of his own native land.

Intensely imbued with the spirit of patriotism he loved the hills and glens of Scotland with all the devotion of an exile. " If I did not see the heather once a year I believe I should die," said Scott to Washington Irving ; and Shairp considered a year wasted of which no part was spent

in rambling through the Highlands, among the Border hills, or in the more peaceful beauty of his native country. In Professor Knight's ideal biography—*Principal Shairp and his Friends*—we have many bright sketches of these tours, which were generally made in company with kindred spirits, and all evince the deep reverence and interest with which he regarded the scenery of his country and its historical associations. Is he on the Borders? then must he take the freshness of the morning and walk over the hills to visit Crawford's evergreen *Bush aboon Traquair*, and make it bloom bonnier yet in his own exquisite verses: or he is toiling up Dobb's Linn to view "the dark Loch Skene" and the dreary morass of the Long Grain, where, under the shadow of the White Coomb and in the wild ravines of the Midlaw Burn, the martyred Renwick and the devoted "remnant" of the children of the Covenant found their last refuge from the dragoons of Claverhouse. In the Highlands he seeks the haunts of the Jacobites and wanders wide among the gloomy glens

"That sheltered Scotland's heir,"

and which by such associations are rendered doubly dear to him. Such is the man—a Scot of the Scots, consumed with the *perfidum ingenium Scotorum*, and a worshipper of all that is romantic, beautiful and noble in the scenes and history of his country. In this connection Professor Veitch remarks: "It was those scenes met face to face, acting on a poetic soul, and strong historical and patriotic sympathies, which, by their own features and their power to such a mind of an ever-thrilling suggestion, made Shairp what he truly was, as poet or even prose writer."

In Shairp's *Journal* for 1849 we find the following

characteristic entry, made at Houstoun after listening to a sermon by the Rev. J. Smith of Ecclesmachan :—"Many things haunt me, in the calmness and unbroken flow of my life here. I often wonder whether or not it would be better to give up some of the pleasures—hunting for instance ; not that I think it wrong, but I have scruples about it. Perhaps it breaks in on any dawns of spirituality ; on the other hand it is freshening, exhilarating, strengthening for body and mind. And it does not do to encourage morbid or womanly feelings, nor to begin a life of self-denial from which one may afterwards recede. Better to be slow in beginning than too quick and rash. Still let me try to be honest." This questioning of his soul as to anything that might retard its upward flight but instances that earnestness of purpose which ever animated his life, and won the love of his friends. Hunting and curling appear to have been the only two recreations for which he had any relish : the former he has celebrated in *The Run*, and the latter in *The Bonspiel*.

On 23rd June, 1853, he married Eliza Douglas, a sister of his college friend Henry Douglas, afterwards Bishop of Bombay.

In October, 1857, Shairp was appointed deputy-professor of Latin in St. Andrews, and four years later on the death of Dr Pyper he obtained the professorship. This post he filled for seven years with honour alike to himself and the University, and on the decease of Principal Forbes, son-in-law of the illustrious "Christopher North," in 1868, he was elected Principal of the United College of St. Salvador and St. Leonard, which office he held till his death.

In 1864 he published *Kilmahoe and other Poems*, which contains some of his finest efforts. Of *The Bush above*

Traquair Dr Brown, the gifted author of *Rab and his Friends*, writes thus :—"I like this more and more. It has an unspeakable charm,—the true pastoral melancholy of the region—and these long satisfying lines, like the stride of a shepherd over the crown of Minchmoor. I would rather be the man to write this exquisite song than Gladstone with all his goodness and greatness."

In June, 1877, Shairp was appointed Professor of Poetry in the University of Oxford, which post he was enabled to hold in conjunction with the St. Andrews principalship.

From 1880 his health had been indifferent, and in the early summer of 1885 he visited the Riviera where he stayed for two months without much appreciable improvement. Returning to Scotland the bracing air of his native land seemed to revive him; but while on a visit to Ormsary, Argyll, he took ill, and getting gradually weaker died on the 18th of September, 1885.

His body was interred in the family vault within Uphall Parish Church. In the following year St. Andrews commemorated his worth by placing a memorial window in the College Church there.

His principal works are :—

- "Kilmahoe and other Poems," 1864.
- "Studies in Poetry and Philosophy," 1868.
- "Culture and Religion," 1870.
- "The Poetic Interpretation of Nature," 1877.
- "Burns" (for Morley's series of Men of Letters), 1879.
- "Aspects of Poetry," 1881.
- "Glen Dessaray," 1886.
- "Sketches in History and Poetry," 1887.

The last two were published posthumously, though the last named had appeared in 1882 in *Frazer's Magazine*.

The poetry of Shairp is always fresh and redolent of nature, and all unconsciously he mirrors his own character in his verse. We have a fine word-picture of his personality from the pen of Professor Veitch, who first met him at Tibbie Shields' in the summer of 1856, and describes him as "a fair-haired, ruddy-faced, and manly man—with open light grey-blue eyes—frank and affable, with ready recognition." He adds, "I marked him inwardly as a congenial and lovable man."

Few men have made more or warmer friends than Principal Shairp, or lived more in their love and esteem. Among his friends he counted Norman Macleod, Clough, Matthew Arnold, Lord Coleridge, Archbishop Benson, Professor Veitch, Dr John Brown and Dean Stanley, all of whom he impressed by his lovable and transparent nature.

THE MOOR OF RANNOCH.

O'er the dreary moor of Rannoch
Calm these hours of Sabbath shine ;
But no kirk-bell here divideth
Week-day toil from rest divine.

Ages pass, but save the tempest,
Nothing here makes toil or haste ;
Busy weeks nor restful Sabbath
Visit this abandoned waste.

Long ere prow of earliest savage
Grated on blank Albyn's shore
Lay these drifts of granite boulders,
Weather-bleached and lichen'd o'er.

Beuchaille Etive's furrowed visage
To Schihallion looked sublime,
O'er a wide and wasted desert,
Old and unreclaimed as time.

Yea ! a desert wide and wasted,
Washed by rain-floods to the bones ;
League on league of heather blasted,
Storm-gashed moss, grey boulder-stones ;

And along these dreary levels,
As by some stern destiny placed,
Yon sad lochs of black moss water
Grimly gleaming on the waste ;

East and west and northward sweeping.
Limitless the mountain plain,
Like a vast low-heaving ocean
Girdled by its mountain chain :

Plain, o'er which the kingliest eagle
Ever screamed by dark Lochowe,
Fain would droop a laggard pinion
Ere he touched Ben-Aulder's brow :

Mountain-girdled,—there Bendoran
To Schihallion calls aloud,
Beckons he to lone Ben-Aulder,
He to Nevis crowned with cloud.

Cradled here old Highland rivers,
Etive, Cona, regal Tay,
Like the shout of clans to battle,
Down the gorges break away.

And the Atlantic sends his pipers
Up yon thunder-throated glen,
O'er the moor at midnight sounding
Pibrochs never heard by men.

Clouds, and mists, and rains before them
Crowding to the wild wind tune,
Here to wage their all-night battle,
Unbeheld by star and moon.

Loud the while down all his hollows,
Flashing with a hundred streams,
Corrie-bah from out the darkness
To the desert roars and gleams.

Sterner still, more drearily driven,
There o' nights the north wind raves
His long homeless lamentation,
As from Arctic seamen's graves.

Till his mighty snow-sieve shaken
Down hath blinded all the lift,
Hid the mountains, plunged the moorland
Fathom-deep in mounded drift.

Such a time, while yells of slaughter
Burst at midnight on Glencoe,
Hither flying babes and mothers
Perished 'mid the waste of snow.

Countless storms have scrawled unheeded
Characters o'er these houseless moors ;
But that night engraven forever
In all human hearts endures.

Yet the heaven denies not healing
To the darkest human things,
And to-day some kindlier feeling
Sunshine o'er the desert flings.

Though the long deer-grass is moveless,
And the corrie-burns are dry,
Music comes in gleams and shadows
Woven beneath the dreaming eye.

Desert not deserted wholly !
Where such calms as these can come,—
Never tempest more majestic
Than this boundless silence dumb.

THE BUSH ABOON TRAQUAIR.

Will ye gang wi' me and fare
To the bush aboon Traquair ?
Owre the high Minchmuir we'll up and awa',
This bonny simmer noon,
While the sun shines fair aboon,
And the licht sklents saftly down on holm and ha'.

And what would ye do there,
At the bush aboon Traquair ?
A lang dreich road, ye had better let it be ;
Save some auld skrunts o' birk
I' the hill-side lirk,
There's nocht i' the warld for man to see.

But the blithe lilt o' that air,
"The Bush aboon Traquair,"
I need nae mair, it's eneuch for me ;
Owre my cradle its sweet chime
Cam' sughin' frae auld time,
Sae tide what may, I'll awa' and see.

And what saw ye there
At the bush aboon Traquair ?
Or what did ye hear that was worth your heed ?
I heard the cushies croon
Through the gowden afternoon,
And the Quair burn singing down to the Vale o' Tweed.

And birks saw I three or four,
Wi' grey moss bearded owre,
The last that are left o' the birken shaw,
Whar mony a simmer e'en
Fond lovers did convene,
Thae bonny, bonny gloamins that are lang awa'.

Frae mony a but and ben,
 By muirland, holm, and glen,
 They cam' ane hour to spen' on the greenwood sward ;
 But lang hae lad and lass
 Been lying 'neth the grass—
 The green, green grass o' Traquair kirkyard.

They were blest beyond compare
 When they held their trysting there,
 Amang thae greenest hills shone on by the sun ;
 And then they wan a rest,
 The lownest and the best,
 I' Traquair kirkyard when a' was dune.

Now the birks to dust may rot,
 Names o' lovers be forgot,
 Nae lads and lasses there ony mair convene ;
 But the blithe lilt o' yon air
 Keeps the bush aboon Traquair,
 And the love that ance was there, aye fresh and green.

THE HAIRST RIG.

O how my heart lap to her
 Upon the blithe hairst rig !
 Ilk morning comin' owre the fur
 Sae gracefu', tall, and trig.

Chorus—O the blithe hairst rig !
 The blithe hairst rig ;
 Fair fa' the lads and lasses met
 On the blithe hairst rig !

At twal' hours aft we sat aloof,
 Aneth the biolding stook,
 And tently frae her bonny loof
 The thistle thorns I took.

When hairst was dune and neebors met
To haud the canty kirn,
Sae fain we twa to steal awa'
And daunder up the burn.

The lammies white as new fa'en drift
Lay quiet on the hill,
The clouds aboon i' the deep blue lift
Lay whiter, purer still.

Ay, pearly white, the clouds that night
Shone marled to the moon,
But nought like you, my bonnie doo !
All earth or heaven aboon.

The burnie whimpering siller clear,
It made a pleasant tune ;
But O ! there murmured in my ear
A sweeter, holier soun'.

Lang, lang we cracked, and went and came,
And daundered, laith to part ;
But the ae thing I daured na name
Was that lay neist my heart.

Fareweel cam' owre and owre again,
And yet we could na sever,
Till words were spake in that dear glen
That made us ane forever.

BANNOCKBURN.

Softly the West blew, and the May-morn shone,
When from an ancient beautiful abode
My father led me, all his field-gear on,
And o'er the plain of Bannockburn we rode
To meet the hounds, and the blithe hunter train,
Upon the moory hills beneath Dunblane,
And take the season's latest benison.

O that first look athwart the famous Field !
 That vision of the Castled Rock sublime !
 Through all my being how it glowed and thrilled
 Pulsations of the unforgotten time :
 Then with the music of the baying pack,
 All the old chivalries came floating back,
 And mingled with the chevy and the chime.

And as the chase went crashing all day long
 O'er Sheriffmuir, and down through Kippen glen,
 My heart, unweeting of the hunter throng,
 Was busy with the Bruce and his brave men :
 Then at dayfall, the moon on our return,
 Serene as on the eve of Bannockburn,
 Looked from Demayet down with cloudless ken.

CLEARANCE SONG.

(From *Kilmahoe*.)

From Lochourn to Glenfinnan the grey mountains ranging,
 Naught falls on the eye but the changed and the changing,
 From the hut by the lochside, the farm by the river,
 Macdonalds and Camerons pass—and for ever.

The flocks of one stranger the long glens are roaming,
 Where a hundred bien homesteads smoked bonny at gloaming,
 Our wee crofts run wild wi' the bracken and heather,
 And our gables stand ruinous, bare to the weather.

To the green mountain shealings went up in old summers
 From farm-toun and clachan how mony blithe comers !
 Though green the hill pastures lie, cloudless the heaven,
 No milker is singing there, morning or even.

Where high Mam-clach-ard by the ballach is breasted,
 Ye may see the grey cairns where old funerals rested,
 They who built them have long in their green graves been sleeping,
 And their sons gone to exile, or willing or weeping.

The Chiefs, whom for ages our claymores defended,
Whom landless and exiled our fathers befriended,
From their homes drive their clansmen when famine is sorest,
Cast out to make room for the deer of the forest.

Yet on far fields of fame, when the red ranks were reeling,
Who prest to the van like the men from the shealing?
Ye were fain in your need Highland broadswords to borrow,
Where, where are they now, should the foe come to-morrow?

Alas for the day of the mournful Culloden!
The clans from that hour down to dust have been trodden;
They were leal to their Prince, when red wrath was pursuing,
And have reaped in return but oppression and ruin.

It's plaintive in harvest, when lambs are a-spaining,
To hear the hills loud with ewe-mothers complaining—
Ah! sadder that cry comes from mainland and islands,
The sons of the Gael have no home in the Highlands.

THE SACRAMENTAL SABBATH.

'Mid the folding mountains,
Old Kilcieran's lone kirkyard
Round its ruined chapel gathers,
Age by age, the gray hill-fathers
Underneath the heathery sward.
Centuries gone the saint from Erin
Hither came on Christ's behest,
Taught and toiled, and when was ended
Life's long labour, here found rest;
And all ages since have followed
To the ground his grave hath blessed.
Up the long glen narrowing
Inland from the eastern deep,
In the kirkyard o'er the river,
Where dead generations sleep,
Living men on summer Sabbaths
Worship long have loved to keep.

There o'er graves lean lichen'd crosser,
Placed long since by hands unknown,
Sleeps the ancient warrior under
The blue claymore-sculptured stone,
And the holy well still trickles
From rock basin, grass o'ergrown.

Lulled the sea this Sabbath morning,
Calm the golden misted glens,
And the white clouds upward passing
Leave unveiled the azure Bens,
Altars pure to lift to heaven
Human hearts' unheard amens.

And the folk are flowing
Both from near and far, enticed
By old wont and reverent feeling
Here to keep the hallowed tryst,
This calm sacramental Sabbath,
Far among the hills, with Christ.

Dwellers on this side the country
Take the shore road, near their doors,
Poor blue-coated fishers, plaided
Crofters from the glens and moors,
Fathers, mothers, sons, and daughters,
Hither trooping, threes and fours.

Plaids were there that only Sabbath
Saw, and wives' best tartan hoods,
Grannies' white coifs, and bareheaded
Maidens with their silken snoods ;
Many-hued, home-woven tartans,
Brightening these grave solitudes.

You might see on old white horses
Aged farmers slowly ride,
With their wives behind them seated,
And the collie by their side ;
While the young folk follow after,
Son and daughter, groom and bride.

There a boat or two is coming
From lone isle or headland o'er,
Many more, each following other,
Slowly pull along the shore,
Fore and aft to gunwale freighted
With the old, the weak, the poor.

The bowed down, the lame, the palsied,
Those with panting breath opprest,
Widows poor, in mutch and tartan
Cloak, for one day lent them, drest,
And the young and ruddy mother
With the bairnie at her breast.

And the western shores Atlantic,
All the rough side of Kintyre,
Send small bands since morn, far-travelled
O'er hill, river, moss, and mire,
Down the mountain shoulders moving
Toward this haven of their desire.

Sends each glen and hidden corrie,
As they pass, its little train,
To increase the throng that thickens
Kirkward, like the growing gain
From hill burns, which some vale-river
Broadening beareth to the main.

While the kirkyard, throng and thronger
Groweth, some their kindred greet ;
Others in lone nooks and corners
To some grass-grown grave retreat,
There heed not the living, busy
With the dead beneath their feet.

Here on green mound sits a widow,
Rocking crooningly to and fro,
Over him with whom so gladly
To God's house she used to go ;
There the tears of wife and husband
Blend o'er a small grave below.

There you might o'erhear some old man,
Palsied, speaking to his son,
"See thou underneath this headstone
Make my bed when all is done.
There long since I laid my father,
There his forbears lie, each one."

They too, all a kindly household
From morn-gladdened Kilmahoe,
Steek their door, and maid and mistress
Toward the Sabbath gathering go,
Lady lone, and four fair daughters,
By the lulled sea murmuring low.

Upward from the shingly sea-beach,
By the long glen's grassy road,
First the white-haired lady mother,
Then the elder sisters, trode,
Last came Moira fair, and Marion,
All their spirits overawed.

Meek and very lowly
Souls, bowed down with reverent fear,
This their first communion day !
To the awful Presence holy
Dread it is to draw so near,
Pain it were to turn away.

So of old the Hebrew maiden,
'Mid the Galilean mountains
Leaving all her childhood time,
With her kinsfolk, incense-laden,
By Kedron's brook, Siloam's fountains,
Zion's hill awe-struck would climb.

As they pass within the kirkyard,
Some old eyes long used to stoop
Rose and brightened on these maidens,
Youngest of the family group,
Marion's flaxen ringlets, Moira's
Large soft eyes with downward droop.

Loved ones of the country people,
They had dandled them on their knees,
Watched them with their bairnies ranging
The shore coves and mountain leas ;
Year by year beheld their beauty
Like a summer dawn increase :
Now on this their first communion
Those old eyes look blessing and peace.

Sweet the chime from ruined belfry
Stealeth ; at its peaceful call
Round the knoll whereon the preacher
Takes his stand, they gather all :
In whole families seated, o'er them
Hallowed stillness seems to fall.

There they sit, the men bareheaded
By their wives ; in reverence meek
Many an eye to heaven is lifted,
Many lips, not heard to speak,
Mutely moving, on their worship
From on high a blessing seek.

Some on gray-mossed headstones seated,
Some on mounds of wild thyme balm,
Grave-browed men and tartaned matrons
Swell the mighty Celtic psalm,
On from glen to peak repeated,
Far into the mountain calm.

Then the aged pastor rose,
White with many a winter's snows
Fallen o'er his ample brows ;
And his voice of pleading prayer,
Cleaving slow the still blue air,
All his people's need laid bare.

Laden with o'erflowing feeling
Then streamed on his fervid chant,
In the old Highland tongue appealing
To each soul's most hidden want,
With the life and deep soul-healing
He who died now lives to grant.

Slow the people round the table
Outspread, white as mountain sleet,
Gather, the blue heaven above them,
And their dead beneath their feet ;
There in perfect reconciliation
Death and life immortal meet.

Noiseless round that fair white table
'Mid their fathers' tombstones spread,
Hoary-headed elders moving,
Bear the hallowed wine and bread,
While devoutly still the people
Low in prayer bow the head.

And no sound was heard—save only
Distance-lulled the Atlantic roar,
Over the calm mountains coming
From far Machrahanish shore,
Like an audible eternity
Brooding the hushed people o'er.

Soon they go—but ere another
Day of hallowed bread and wine,
Some now here shall have ascended
To communion more divine,
Some have changed their old hill-dwellings,
Some have swept the tropic line.

JAMES FORREST.

Born 1821.

JAMES FORREST was born at Bathgate in the year 1821. He received his education at the old Parochial School and latterly at the Bathgate Academy. He was an apt pupil and carried off the prizes for Latin and English in the latter institution at a period when these were awarded only to the first scholar in each class, and it is needless to say that these volumes are the most cherished in his little library. On leaving school he was apprenticed to the watchmaking, but he soon relinquished this business and at the age of twenty went to the United States. After spending a few years in New York he removed to Milwaukee, then a mere collection of wooden houses, where he engaged for some years in trade which consisted mostly of a system of barter. Thereafter he migrated to Buffalo, thence to New Jersey, and eventually resumed his residence in New York. While there a gradual loss of hearing set in, and, being advised to try the effects of his native air and the more skilled treatment obtainable there for the restoration of that sense—which, however, proved unavailing—he wound up his business and returned to Scotland in 1860, settling in his native town where he has since resided. Most of that time he has been engaged in the oil trade—first at the Bathgate Chemical Works and, since the decay of that industrial centre, at Uphall. Mr Forrest has always taken a keen interest in all that pertains to the welfare of Bathgate, and with ready pen and voice has

done yeoman service when necessity required, yet without the spirit of rancour which is altogether foreign to his disposition. In 1861 he, in conjunction with the late Thomas G. Ferguson, started the first weekly newspaper published in the town—*The Bathgate Times*—but an unfortunate lawsuit prematurely closed its somewhat adventurous career. When “Under the Beeches Literary Society” was formed some twenty-two years ago Mr Forrest was appointed Secretary at its first meeting—a position which he has since continued to hold; and for his services in this capacity he has frequently been the recipient of valuable presents from the members: indeed it is admitted that the brilliant minutes of the meeting are frequently the most appreciated item in the monthly sederunt. His prose contributions to the periodical press during half-a-century would require a large catalogue to enumerate. Of these, however, mention may be made of *Bird Notes*, in which the habits and peculiarities of our feathered friends are sketched with a loving knowledge that might give them a place with White’s Natural History of Selborne. He is also a recognised authority on the fairy mythology, traditions, and antiquities of the district, on which subjects he has made many valuable contributions to the local press. In poetry he has not been so prolific; but what he has written is marked by a simplicity and occasional pith which betoken that his comparatively few flights in this flowery realm are not so much for lack of talent as want of inclination. In disposition he is genial and kindly and still bears in his breast the heart of youth and the warm enthusiasm of boyhood. Few men enjoy so much of the regard and esteem of their fellows as the amiable and generous-hearted “Frien’ Forrest.”

THE RIVER.

From a fount amid the hills,
Fed by many sparkling rills,
Singing on in merry trills,
Flows the river.

Trembling o'er a rocky linn,
Sending forth a brattling din,
Ruffled by the balmy win',
Flows the river.

'Mid the heather's purple flowers,
Where the muircock hidden cowers
From man's stern and savage powers,
Flows the river.

Through the forest's verdant glade,
Near the bridge where children wade,
'Neath the sylvan leafy shade
Flows the river.

Gliding by the village green,
Sparkling in the summer sheen,
Lovely as a Naiad Queen
Flows the river.

Round the old mill's dripping wheel
Where the waters splash and reel,
Where the swallows dip and wheel
Flows the river.

By the hamlet quaint and old,
By the outlaw's rocky hold,
By historic scenes oft told
Flows the river.

Past yon castellated towers,
Past the banks, gay decked with flowers,
Dimpled o'er with falling showers
Flows the river.

Sweeping through the landscape bold
 As if tinged with burnished gold,
 When the wings of gloamin' fold,
 Flows the river.

Where the graceful willows wave
 O'er the youthful hero's grave,
 Singing praises to the brave,
 Flows the river.

Speeding onwards to the sea
 By green mead and flow'ry lea,
 Making music aye to me,
 Flows the river.

Emblem of the strong and free,
 Of life's changing, restless sea,
 Onward to Eternity
 Flows the river.

THE PUIR WIFE'S BRAE.¹

Dear Puir Wife's Brae, dear Puir Wife's Brae !
 Within thy shelt'ring shade
 How many youthful plans were formed,
 And airy castles made
 When youth and hope lit up the scene—
 When earth seemed rainbow-hued ;—
 Sweet mem'ries haunt thy shaded walks
 Of love and vows renewed.

In festoons, o'er thy moss-clad walls,
 Hung honeysuckle flowers,
 Whose fragrance filled the evening air,
 When wet with summer showers.

¹ A belt of woodland a mile to the eastward of Bathgate has been so called from time immemorial.

As rosy morn, with tinted light,
Shone o'er thy leaf-strewn ground,
The feathered songsters' tuneful throats
Woke echoes all around.

The plaintive cushat's croodlin' notes
Fell on the evening breeze,
As balmy winds, on downy wings,
Stole through thy stately trees :
As Sol sank slowly to his rest
Here gloamin' softly fell ;
When music from thy quiv'ring leaves
Came o'er us like a spell.

Life's silent eve comes slowly on,
And stills its restless sea ;
Time's fleeting pinions onward move
To dim eternity :
And when life's battle has been fought,
And off my armour cast,
May I find rest, dear haunt of youth,
Within thy shade at last.

TO MY MOTHER-LODGE.

Bathgate Torphichen Kilwinning, No. 13—Auld Thirteen.

Air—"Scotland yet."

Beneath Kilwinning's auld roof-tree
Assembled are we a',
To spend the hours in social glee,
And drive dull care awa' ;
For round about this board to-night
True Masons all are we.
Dear Auld Thirteen, dear Auld Thirteen,
Our Mother-Lodge is she :
May Fortune smile upon her sons
Wherever they may be.

Within this Mystic Temple, then,
Let Faith and Hope entwine,
May Charity's effulgent robe
Clothe all with Love divine,
And Wisdom wait upon the Sons
Of Light and Harmony.
Dear Auld Thirteen, &c.

Amid the changing scene of life,
'Mid worldly strife and care,
Let all your actions fashioned be
By the Compass and the Square ;
And, mindful of Life's Golden Rule,
Join Love and Unity.
Dear Auld Thirteen, &c.

Of orders kings and nobles boast,
Of stars and royal blood ;
Antiquity is stamped on ours,—
It dates from near the flood :
O'er all the world our Order's known
By deeds of Charity.
Dear Auld Thirteen, &c.

Then to the Craft let's pledge a toast,
With honours three-times-three,
Auld Thirteen's sons in every land
True Masons may they be :
They'll find across Life's troublous scene
A bless'd eternity.
Dear Auld Thirteen, dear Auld Thirteen,
Our Mother-Lodge is she :
May Fortune smile upon her sons
Wherever they may be.

AMONG THE HAWS.

The hairst had a' been gathered in,
 Broon were the leafy shaws,
When, loosed frae schule, a merry band
 Set aff to gather haws.
Oh, weel I mind that gleesome day,
 Set free frae spells an' tawse ;
October's sun shone brightly doon
 Upon the clust'ring haws.

The auld manse hedge, aye milky white
 When simmer win' saft blaws,
Stood then in its autumnal pride
 Deep laden wi' the haws :
Fond mem'ry yet recalls the cheers,
 The happy, loud huzzas,
That went out from each boyish throat
 As we surveyed the haws.

A dash—a rush—the heights were climbed,
 Thro' thorns like tigers' claws,
Then shout an' cry rang thro' the air
 When swinging 'mong the haws.
Nae carking cares held us in toils,
 Nae thochts o' wealth or braws,
Nae dreams o' honour fashed oor paws
 High up among the haws.

Oh ! happy time, when routh o' wealth
 Shone in oor bools an' ba's,
When a' the world seemed in oor grasp
 That day among the haws :
An' looking back thro' mem'ry's vale
 A silent tear aft fa's
For those who fifty years ago
 Gaed aff to gather haws.

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When wand'ring winds in autumn roam
Thro' dells an' greenwood shaws,
Then boyish voices seem to stir
The hedge where we pu'd haws.
The last of all that joyous band,
Crowned with time's whitening snaws,
With him remains, aye fresh an' green,
That day among the haws.

THE DEATH AND BURIAL OF THE THRUSH.

Soft and low as zephyrs sighing
Comes the south wind thro' the trees,
Fragrant with the hawthorn blossoms,
Filled with hum of droning bees.

Saunt'ring thro' the monkish ruin,
Thinking o'er the slumb'ring dead,
Where the Laird of Boghead,¹ mourned,
Sleepeth in his narrow bed.

To the turf that lightly covers
That true friend of feathered kind
Came the thrush, life ebbing quickly
To the sobbing of the wind.

Close by where the quivering ivy
Mantles o'er the ruined walls,
Cold in death now lies the throistle,
Heedless of the parent calls.

Sweetly as the bells were chiming
Thro' the summer Sabbath air
Wend we to the uplands, grieving
For the thrush's parent pair.

¹The late Thomas Durham Weir, Esq. of Boghead, a noted ornithologist.

'Midst the wild flowers' sweetest incense
Cut the grave thro' richest mould ;
In a shroud of silky texture
Tenderly our thrush enfold.

Out from 'midst the golden blossoms,
As we lay the dead to rest,
Chant the requiem, thrush and linnet,
When the sun sinks in the west.

When the dawn comes slowly creeping
As from out the ocean wave,
There its light, like silver gleaming,
First shall kiss the thrush's grave.

THOMAS LEARMONTH CHAPMAN.

Born 1824.

THOMAS LEARMONTH CHAPMAN was born at the little village of Beancross in the parish of Falkirk about the year 1824. He attended Polmont Parish School till the age of eight when, his parents having removed to a small farm in the parish of Bothkennar, he attended school there for other two years, being employed herding in the mornings and evenings. Thereafter he entered country service which employment he followed till 1852 when he succeeded his father in the farm of Bridgehouse, then a small farm on the estate of Craigengall, Torphichen, to which his parents had removed eleven years previously. In 1868 he entered into tenancy of the farm of Wester Hillhouse on the same property where he has since resided.

For many years Mr Chapman has taken an intelligent interest in public affairs with which he has always been prominently identified. He is President of the Woodend Burns Club, and has for long been associated with the educational life of the parish as a member of the Torphichen School Board. He possesses a fine fund of dry, pawky Scottish humour which generally enriches his public appearances, and enlivens the social hours in the circle of friendship. He has contributed a good many prose sketches to the local press of recent years on topical subjects under the veil of anonymity. Such diffidence in a prose writer does not specially call for comment, but to find the same failing more intensified in a

poet of merit is very rare. His poetry, which for the above reason has not previously appeared in print, generally takes the form of the lyric in which he shows to decided advantage, and we would commend these specimens of his power in that direction to the notice of our composers. *Come awa', lassie braw* is a gem which might adorn any collection of Scottish song, and would have reflected no discredit on the lyrical genius of Hew Ainslie, of whose breeziness it is reminiscent.

COME AWA', LASSIE BRAW.

Can ye lo'e, my dear lassie, yon wild mossy fells
A' blooming in pride wi' the sweet heatherbells?
Or the green-tufted heath whaur the crawberries grow?
Then come awa', lassie braw, dinna say No.

Can ye lo'e the burn, lassie, that fa's o'er the linn?
Or the craig a' bedecked wi' the bright yellow whin?
Or the deep woody dell whaur the primroses blow?
Then come awa', lassie braw, dinna say No.

Can ye lo'e, my dear lassie, yon green plantin' side?
Or the cuo o' the cushat when wooing his bride?
Or the sang o' the lintie a-courting his joe?
Then come awa', lassie braw, dinna say No.

Can ye lo'e the flocks, lassie, that graze on the lea?
Or the wee blushing flow'rets whaur sporteth the bee?
Or a walk in the gloam when the sun it fa's low?
Then come awa', lassie braw, dinna say No.

Can ye lo'e, my dear lassie, my hame on the brae,
That the smile o' my Jessie wad aye mak' sae gay;
Wi' a bonnie wee yairdie whaur simmer flowers blow?
Then come awa', lassie braw, dinna say No.

Can ye lo'e the lad, lassie, that lo'es nane but thee,
Wha lives on the light o' your saft rolling e'e?
Or break a fond heart should your answer be No?
Then come awa', lassie braw, come, let us go.

A TRIBUTE TO THE LATE DR KERK, BATHGATE.

While Bathgate weeps and sable mourning wears
 For him whose face they now will see no more,
 A grateful country wipes the falling tears,
 And mourns a friend that time can ne'er restore :
 A friend whose aid was still at mercy's call,
 Whose skill to rich and poor was freely given ;
 To soothe distress it was his all in all—
 A Doctor loved on earth, revered in Heaven.

A PRAYER.

O Thou that dwell'st in Heaven high,
 And rulest all things here below,
 Do Thou direct the perfect way—
 The humble way that we should go.

Thou formed us in the mother's womb,
 Thou watched us in our cradle bed ;
 In early youth and manhood's bloom
 By Thee our steps were safely led.

And now when our meridian's past
 And night of age doth on us fall,
 Thou wert our first, be Thou our last,
 Our life, our hope, our all in all.

MY AIN.

O were I the lord o' yon gay gilded mansion,
 Yon fine flow'ry terrace although it were mine,
 Compared wi' my Lizzie I'd count them but little,
 And freely wad lose them to ca' her my ain.
 How dear to me now is yon seat in the wildwood,
 And fondly I lo'e the sweet walk in the glen ;
 But dearer by far is the smile o' my lassie,
 And welcome the hour when I meet her again.

How sweet is the green o' the wild mountain foxgloves
 Wi' their cup-shaped blossoms a' glist'ning wi' dew,
 And saft is the lay o' the amorous ringdoves
 As they meet in the gloamin' their loves to renew ;
 But fairer than a' the wild flowers o' the forest,
 Mair true than the wild birds that mate in the glen,
 And dearer to me is the voice o' my dearest
 Wi' her saft-fa'in' whispers that speak her my ain.

BONNIE JESSIE GRAY.

Some love to roam the banks o' Clyde
 Wi' a' its haughs sae fair,
 While ithers like to wander on
 The bonnie banks o' Ayr ;
 But dear to me's yon shady walk
 When at the close o' day
 I wander up the Briggie-side
 Wi' bonnie Jessie Gray.

How gaily green yon leafy beech
 Whaur hums the toiling bee,
 And sweet's the laverock's ev'ning sang
 On Martin's flow'ry lea ;
 But dearer to this beating heart,
 And sweeter far than they,
 Is the music frae the honied lips
 O' bonnie Jessie Gray.

The noble in his lofty ha'
 May woo his gentle bride,
 Or lord it ower his vassals a'
 In a' his stately pride ;
 I'm happier in my russet plaid,
 And blyther far than they,
 When roaming on the Briggie-side
 Wi' bonnie Jessie Gray.

Now I maun lea' my native land
For yonder foreign shore,
And bid adieu to Scotia's strand
To cross the ocean o'er :
I'll ne'er forget, whate'er betide,
Though I am far away,
The happy hours on Briggie-side
Wi' bonnie Jessie Gray.

FOR A LADY'S SCRAP-BOOK.

As parched land waits the gentle shower,
As drooping plants the dew,
So long I for the happy hour—
The hour I meet with you.

CHRISTOPHER MURRAY DAWSON, F.E.I.S.

Born 1826.

CHRISTOPHER MURRAY DAWSON was born at Cupar-Fife in 1826. His parents were both of a literary inclination, and given to poetical composition. They were only resident some two months in Cupar altogether when they removed to the Borders and finally settled about 1830

“In Coldstream toon wi’ Coldstream folk.”

Here, on the banks of the classic Tweed, the boy received his education—the teaching of the school happily blending with that education which nature freely gives to her lovers. After finishing his course he served his apprenticeship as a private pupil teacher, and in 1844 returned to his native town of Cupar as assistant English master in the Madras Academy. That his work in the Academy was onerous may be gleaned from the fact that the daily average attendance at his classes was 350; but he gave himself devotedly to his duties, and taught with remarkable success for one so young in years. On accepting the position of master of Abercorn Parish School in 1846, the Trustees of Madras Academy testified their appreciation of his abilities by requesting him to nominate his successor—his nominee being accepted and amply justifying Mr Dawson’s good opinion of him.

At Abercorn, where as a teacher he was eminently successful, he remained for the long period of forty-three

years; so that the county may well claim him as an adopted son. While resident in that locality of peaceful beauty he had many inducements of greater worldly ambition and gain held out to him. He was offered positions in two of the Oxford Colleges, and other posts which might well have tempted a more ambitious mind; but the pleasures of country life, and the ever-varying charms of the wave-washed shore were to his nature the very essence of being, and wove a spell round his heart that no visions of preferment could ever break.

“Many there are among the crowd of men
Who disregard what lies beneath their feet,”

says Pindar; but certainly Mr Dawson was never one of these. Shortly after his settlement in Abercorn he began exploring the rocks in the parish, and soon got deeply interested in their stratification. Ere long he had fully satisfied himself that we had around us traces of three extinct volcanoes, forming no insignificant part of the chain of small volcanoes which stretched between Edinburgh and Bo'ness. His observations, and the deductions made therefrom, have since been amply verified by independent observers, and the sites of these volcanoes are now noted in the Government Geological Survey Maps of Scotland. In the course of his rambles in the parish he also found traces of the later ice-age, of an old British fort, and of a sea-beach 88 feet above the present sea-level. He was fortunate enough to discover in the last two large bones, evidently the vertebræ of a whale, embedded in a layer of shells. Specimens of the shells and portions of the bones he preserved and they are now in his private museum of relics and curios—a repository which is being continually

augmented by the contributions of friends and former pupils from all parts of the world. His discoveries in the fields of geological and antiquarian research are embodied in several interesting papers contributed by him to the *Transactions of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*.

When, in the Fifties, the demand for Popular Lectures became strong Mr Dawson, seeing in the movement an opportunity for imparting instruction in a pleasant form and arousing interest in subjects often too far removed from common life, entered into it heartily, and having a facility with pencil and brush found no difficulty in sketching large illustrations for his lectures ; although latterly he used a magic lantern—painting his own slides. The subjects of these lectures were very varied :—Astronomy, Physiology, Geology, The Heritage of Toil, The Poet's Place and Power, Characteristics of the Human Mind, Immortality of the Soul, Redemption in Creation, Garibaldi, &c., and were delivered in the towns and villages of Linlithgowshire, in Edinburgh, and elsewhere. This employment of his leisure hours, together with his duties as Session Clerk, Registrar, and Treasurer of the School Board, left him little time to devote to literary work ; but, possessing

“ Still the Roman will
To find a way or make it,”

his achievements in this capacity are all the more worthy of praise. Returning from his professional duties wearied in body and exhausted in mind, with the further disadvantage of indifferent health, the task of weaving webs of words he often gladly suspended or postponed for the pleasures of boating, gardening or geologising, where, in the open air, in sweet communion with dear old mother nature, he could

drink at her life-giving fountain and brace his frame for another day's earnest, loving toil. He has, therefore, published comparatively little: occasional articles for the daily and weekly press, and one or two brochures, all given to the public anonymously, summing up his minor literary publications. In 1865 Mr Dawson was elected a Fellow of the Geological Society of Edinburgh, and he is also a Fellow of the Educational Institute of Scotland. On the attainment of his jubilee as a teacher in 1889 he retired from active service when his many friends and former pupils took occasion to mark their appreciation and regard by presenting him, through the Earl of Hopetoun, with a complete silver tea service and a purse of sovereigns. Since then Mr Dawson has resided in Edinburgh.

In 1891 he published a selection from his poetical pieces under the title of *Avonmore and other poems*. *Avonmore*, which gives the book its title, is the most ambitious of these, and is of decided merit. It paints in powerful and well-sustained imagery the life-picture of a young man grappling with the forms of unbelief and who, for the time being, is overborne by them. Finally the mist and the darkness of doubt are dispelled by the beams of the uprising Sun of Righteousness, and he sees God as He is—loving and merciful.

We regret that the exigencies of space must so limit our selections from this noble poem: indeed, it is all so finely written that extracts fail to serve the purpose desired, and only whet the appetite.

Of Mr Dawson a critic has said:—"He looks upon life as a glorious heritage, dark though often our surroundings be. But as our cold, unfriendly climate has developed in our national character patience, perseverance, industry, and

almost a sublime earnestness of purpose, so trials, difficulties, adverse social position rightly met and fought, stiffen every fibre of our being, and bring out the better and nobler parts of our nature, in short, make us twice a man. Belief in a Father near, peace through the cross, living for others and seeking to leave the world better than he found it, sums up his creed."

Mr Dawson's work was, without exception, cordially welcomed by the press,—a fact which will occasion little surprise to those who know his muse best. Mr Dawson finds an honoured place in Edwards' *Modern Scottish Poets* and in Rev. W. S. Crockett's *Minstrelsy of the Merse*.

A TEAR.

O precious luxury—a tear !
 Mute language of our woe,
 First herald of a nobler life,
 Where heavenward love may grow ;
 The sinking soul, nigh in despair,
 Seeks heaven thro' thee,—each drop a prayer.

O token of a kindred soul,
 That makes our griefs her own !
 And sheds this sacred dew wherein
 Love's mystery is shown ;
 And thro' those pearls of tenderness,
 Our cup of sorrow holds the less.

O silent voice of ransomed soul !
 O speech of grateful love !
 More reaching than the Seraph's voice,—
 The envy known above
 As angels', as o'er harps they sweep,
 Oft sinless wish the gift to weep.

—*Avonmore*.

MAN'S BIRTHRIGHT.

Man heirs a birthright from the sky. "Subdue
It" stands his charter still. Earth owns him lord
And worships at his feet. The lightning waits
His hand, outspeeds the hurrying day, and time
And space are dead. The chafing storm receives
His yoke. Its clouded brow frowns all in vain.
The elements toil as his slaves to bless
His store. He works his will, nor fears nor owns
A thwarting power. Eternal law he claims
As his right hand and bulwark of his throne.
In this he lives and moves,—a depute God
To work a higher will behind his own.
Deeds are his thoughts made visible for hands
To handle,—tangible, eternal they.
For them there is no death. They mock the grave,
And walk triumphant through the rolling years.
Man builds for time unborn. Eternities
Far off have their beginnings now, and man's
Poor life,—so full of blots and stains and shreds
Of purpose,—sped with stumbling feet, faint heart,
And weary hands, still cleaves the watching heavens
As one long psalm to God. Does God then bless
But to destroy? God, the All-Builder, moves
The soul-expanding force, touching the soul
Of frail humanity, and man becomes
Co-worker with his God, till very dust
Stands glorified in garments of the skies.
The Father *sees* man's toil with loving gaze,
And counts the roar of work an angel's song.
He hints, He speaks, He points to nobler plans;
Some few He sets as foremen o'er the throng,—
The few that whispers hear behind the veil,
And catch the higher breaths of very God;
Yet each man's honest toil earns Heaven's "Well done,"
And stalwart angel wins no higher praise.
The law which metes God's happiness metes mine;

The pulse that joyous throbs the children's breast
Finds answering pulses in the Eternal Love.

.

Make circumstance

Your slave, and win your right to be a man.
The unit's growth fathers a nation's rise :
This, the proud fruit of triumphs won by that.
The kingdoms of to-day o'ertop their sires,
Though oft a pause, a stop, may intervene.
As swallows, wearied in their ocean-flight,
Rest on the passing ship, but jaded strength
Restored, they bid their ark farewell, and dare
Their unreach'd aim ; so nations pause and breathe,
Then forward press, and carve a higher name
Upon the growing pyramid of time.

Fair stands man's realm, though scarred in many a part ;
But whence the marring hand ? Disease and crime
Point to our slums, our waifs, our herded poor,
Intemperance and Vice, and cry, " Behold
Our place of birth ! " We sow in selfishness,
And nature hurls us back her stern award—
" Eye for an eye,"—a discipline of tears,
Calling on man to sweep the curse away.

—*Aronmore.*

THE ROSE.

I gave a rose unto my love,
Bright dreams my bosom swelled ;
I yearned it might an angel prove,—
It was my all she held.

Leaf after leaf she tore away,
The winds some sighing bore ;
While others scattered round her lay,—
It was my hopes she tore.

Her dainty feet toyed with them there,
 Then pressed them in the sod ;
 I watched her in a wild despair,—
 It was my love she trod.

She bent the stem, it snapped in twain,
 A hell within me woke ;
 I shuddered 'neath its burning pain,—
 It was my heart she broke.

CAPTAIN STRACHAN.

The ship lay on her beams,
 The storm-gods battled there,
 And death howled 'mid the roar,
 And mocked man's wild despair.
 The gallant captain stood
 Amid the pelting spray,
 And near him, in his woe,
 A little stowaway.

He turned and kindly said,
 " You swim, my little man ?"
 " No, sir !"—" Then here's my belt,
 'Twill save you, boy,—I can."
 The ship goes down ! they leap
 Into the maddened wave ;
 The land-waif wins the shore,
 That noble heart,—a grave !

Weep for the glorious dead !
 Men, rouse your souls to share
 The brother-love that fired
 That godlike death to dare !
 Such deeds sublime the race
 'Mid all life's selfish chains ;
 O Britons ! heir his soul,
 His *blood* runs in your veins.

REPLY TO MARRIAGE CARDS.

You're married now ! Well, I'm no clear
To gi'e a smile or drap a tear
At your leg-tethered state ;
It may be bliss, it may be wae,
Frae this unto your dying day,—
An awfu' time to wait !
Yet dark and snell's the bach'lor's lot,
In self his saul is buried ;
I dinna ken a state mair drear,
Unless it be the married.

Just make the best o't, play the man ;
Keep up the game old Ad' began,
For this is Heaven's decree ;
And glad " we wills " the ages prove,
For mankind fa' as glib to love
As burns rin to the sea ;
For ere the beard creeps ower our chin
The stounds o' love mak' sic a din
As thrill us to the core ;
And for a while we hardly ken
We're still amang the strife o' men,
Or some bliss-haunted shore ;
Till Session fees and Sunday " cries,"
And " startin' house " expenses,
And is she ether or an eel,
Bring back our wandering senses.

May heaven's saft dews fa' on your head,
And friendships gem the path you tread,
Frae want and worry free ;
Your wife be mair than wealth untold,
Her smile mair dear than earth's fine gold,
Her life's proud joy in thee,
And be the magnet o' your soul,
The sunshine o' your sky,

Your dearer self in finer mould,
Your treasure from on high.
But O the brightest summer morn,
In dewy spangles dressed,
At eve may lower, be tempest-torn,
And dark clouds drape the west,
While ruthless o'er the mourning scene
The maddened storm careers,
As if the angry heavens enjoyed
All Nature wet with tears.
Yet every wave that beats our bark,
In sailing life's rough main,
Is driven by the breath of love,
For our eternal gain.

And should a wee bit angry word
Drap frae that blythesome, bonnie bird
Wha shares your cosie nest,
E'en dinna think your lot severe,
It's just the way wi' women dear,
As married lives attest ;
They're bubblin' ower wi' routh o' talk,
They tease without a thought,
Like some light shower on summer days,
And then it's a' forgot.
'Tis half the bliss o' married life,
A wee bit wordie spree ;
It stirs the blood and sly breaks up
Love's sweet monotony ;
For contrasts add a zest to joy,
And shew it in new light ;
The shades relieve it, as the day
Is brighter for the night.
And when your wee bit battle's bye,
The first sharp word, the first low sigh,
That wounds like poisoned spears,
You'll press her closer to your breast,

And look in love on heaven's bequest,
 And kiss away her tears.
 And mair than a',—this angry cloud
 Is rich wi' showers o' blessing ;
 For as you win her back to smiles,
 Your courtship's still progressing ;
 Forbearing wi' each ither's faults,
 As doubtna they will come,
 Peace will be thine, and love will make
 An Eden o' your home.

And should kind Providence confer
 A bairn or twa to mak' a stir,
 And toddle round your knee,
 May blessings mingle wi' the care,
 Young holy love your heart to cheer,
 Wi' a' its sinless glee.
 The weary years will fail to mar
 Your brow sae brent, wi' fretfu' scar,—
 There's bliss the bairns among,
 For in their joy you age beguile,
 And baffle wrinkles wi' a smile,
 Wi' heart aye fresh and young.
 Your joys lie round your ingle neuk,
 Its smiles maun smooth life's care :
 There gather strength and brace your soul
 For a' you're called to bear.

THE AULD KIRKYARD—ABERCORN.

There's a spot we haud dear in the auld kirkyard,
 It aye claims a tear in the auld kirkyard ;
 It's 'neath an ashen tree, an' it's dear, dear to me,
 That wee bit o' sod in the auld kirkyard.
 The wind heaves a sigh in the auld kirkyard,
 As it glides gently by in the auld kirkyard,
 As if it missed a flower frae some shady bower,
 An' feared that it lay in the auld kirkyard.

O saft is our tread in the auld kirkyard,
As we draw near our dead in the auld kirkyard ;
A half-whispered word or a look o' regard
Aye tells a' our tale in the auld kirkyard.
Our thoughts rise above in the auld kirkyard
By strange links o' love in the auld kirkyard ;
The spirit-land is near while we drap the silent tear
On the wild tangled grass in the auld kirkyard.

It's dark 'mid the light in the auld kirkyard,
For the heart bends in night in the auld kirkyard ;
We canna see His hand, we silent weeping stand,
An' lang for the day in the auld kirkyard ;
But faith whispers low in the auld kirkyard,
'Twas love sent the blow in the auld kirkyard,
An' frae that vacant chair has sped a spirit fair,
Whose garments mouldering lie in the auld kirkyard.

Sweet spring wakes the flowers in the auld kirkyard,
An' bright sunny hours in the auld kirkyard ;
An' th' dead 'neath the sod, at the voice o' our God,
Will rise a' refreshed frae the auld kirkyard.

WALTER WATT.

Born 1826.

WALTER WATT was born at Edinburgh in September, 1826. On leaving school he was apprenticed to the tobacco trade in his native city, and afterwards resided in Fife for a short time.

About the year 1852 he came to Bathgate as a tobacco-spinner, and here he flung himself heart and soul into the life of the town. Blessed with a ready pen and a fluent tongue, he was conspicuous in the columns of the local papers—then in a transition stage—agitating for the redress of popular grievances, or on the platform advocating the rights of the people. We have before us a copy of the *Bathgate Star*, in which an account is detailed of a demonstration on the Bathgate Muir, the privileges and amenities of which were at that time threatened by the action of the Town Council in letting portions of it for cultivation. Mr Watt delivered an oration on that occasion which, backed by the voice of the town's people, effectually deterred the council from prosecuting their project. An attempt on the part of the trustees to veto the annual Bathgate Academy Procession again brought him to the front to champion the people's cause, and here he was once more victorious.

He also took an active part in the institution and welfare of the Bathgate Mutual Improvement Society, which testified its appreciation of his worth and abilities by presenting him with a life-size portrait of himself in oil.

Though not a native of the county, Mr Watt acknowledges that in it he had his literary birth.

In 1863 he removed to Glasgow, and from thence to High Blantyre, where he carries on the business of a wine and spirit merchant.

In 1881 he published a collection of his fugitive pieces under the title of *Sketches in Prose and Poetry*. As a poet he does not affect to rank very high—indeed he modestly disclaims the title—but he has nevertheless written some poems of considerable merit, although, as James Russell Lowell says of another, “his song is too largely ballasted with prose.”

Mr Watt is well known throughout Britain, and even beyond her borders, as a maker of violins. In this capacity he has taken prizes at many of our International Exhibitions, and is generally recognised among the fiddling fraternity as an authority on that sweetest of all instruments. In connection with this subject he published in 1892 *The Art of Violin Making*—a brochure containing the fruits of his ripe experience, and which was cordially welcomed and praised by the press and violin lovers generally.

A notice of him as a violin maker is given in Baptie’s *Musical Scotland*.

MY FIDDLE.

My Fiddle ! sweet mysterious thing !
O’er thee my muse may plume her wing,
But how thy glory can she sing,
My Fiddle ?

Concentrate art ! what master’s hand
Could fashion out each tiny band,
And pour thy soul out from each strand,
My Fiddle ?

Thy graceful form with am'rous waist,
 Thy taper'd neck, and head so chaste,
 I grasp thee with a lover's haste,
 My Fiddle.

Within thy swelling bosom lies
 Apollo's heavenly mysteries,
 Whose stream perennial never dries—
 My Fiddle.

When toil and troubles bring me pain,
 What soothes my weary soul again?
 The magic of thy seraph's strain,
 My Fiddle.

What draws the band of friendship tight?
 What makes my care and sorrow light?
 What makes the gloom of life look bright?
 My Fiddle!

When friends prove false and pass me by
 With sneaking look and jaundiced eye,
 Thy cheering voice is ever nigh,
 My Fiddle.

Sweet companion! little treasure!
 Fountain of my joy and pleasure!
 With thee I'll tread life's weary measure—
 My Fiddle.

CURLING SONG.

Air—"Hurra for the Thistle."

Hurra for the curlers!
 Oor keen, gallant curlers!
 Hurra for the curlers
 O' Bathgate for me;
 For there's nane far or near
 Can send up a cheer
 Like the brave Bathgate curlers
 When met round the tee.

When the chill breath o' winter
Has frozen the rills,
An' croon'd wi' his snaw-wreaths
The taps o' oor hills ;
Then there's nane in the parish
Sae happy or free
As a gath'rin' o' curlers
When met round the tee.

Though fortune and fame
They may ne'er be oor lot,
An' though whiles in oor pouch
We may scarce ha'e a groat ;
Yet wi' rank, wealth, an' title
We tak' oor degree,
For we're a' nature's bairns
When met round the tee.

Sic roarin' an' thumpin',
Sic rinnin' an' jumpin',
As the stane ower the rink
It comes rowin' sae free ;
While each frien' staunin' by
Waves his besom on high,
An' hails us the victors—
We're first at the tee.

Should the proud flag o' France
On oor shore be unfurld ;
Should the hatred o' tyrants
'Gainst our freedom be hurl'd ;
We'll show that like cowards
We never can dee,
For there's nane that can match
The brave sons o' the tee.

While as patriots an' curlers
We can love ane anither,
Let us aye keep in mind
That each man is a brither,
An' though race an' distinction
May never agree,
We're aye frien's on the ice
When we meet round the tee.

Then awa' wi' your musters
O' brave volunteers ;
Awa' wi' your rifles,
Your swords an' your spears ;
For "Peace" is oor motto
Wherever we be,
Especially o' curlers
When met round the tee.

Then fill up a bumper,
An' pledge wi' a cheer
To the health o' oor gallant
An' brave Durham Weir ;
For though some folks may differ,
True curlers agree
To croon the auld vet'ran
As "King o' the Tee."

An' when curlin' his stanes
On the great rink o' life,
May he aye clear the hogg-score
O' sorrow an' strife ;
An' when the cauld han' o' death
Comes to darken his e'e,
May we find him close up
To his mark at the tee.

SONG OF THE DYING MAIDEN.

Noo the simmer has come wi' its gay flowery treasure,
 The wee birds sing blythly, frae ilka green tree ;
 But their music an' beauty to me brings nae pleasure,
 For Jamie's proved faithless, an' cares na for me.
 O, it's lang since he vowed to prove constant an' faithfu',
 It's lang since he promised to me to prove true ;
 But his vows are a' broken, his heart is ungratefu',
 An' naething but death can yield peace to me noo.

By the green mossy banks o' the far-winding Avon
 I'll wander at e'ening wi' Jamie nae mair,
 Nor in its clear waters my feet I'll sit lavin'
 While he pu's scented wildflowers to garland my hair.
 Frae the broo o' the Knock Hill nae langer thegither
 We'll watch the white sail float o'er yon sounding tide,
 Nor by the Bucht Knowes e'er forgether wi' ither
 To speak o' the time when he'd mak' me his bride.

My breast's like to burst, an' my heart-strings are breakin',
 My brain's in a whirl, while the tears blind my e'e ;
 The worst draught o' sorrow's to ken I'm forsaken,
 An', like a nipt blossom, left to wither and dee.
 But my dirge will be sung by the saft winds o' simmer,
 In auld Bathgate Kirkyaird I'll be free frae a' care,
 An' while thro' its grey ruins the pale moonbeams glimmer,
 My spirit will rest an' feel sadness nae mair.

Fareweel, then, fair world, to thy beauty and grandeur,
 The star o' my hope shines frae yonder blue sphere ;
 An' fareweel to life, wi' its joys an' its splendour,
 An' fareweel, ye scenes to my men'ry sae dear :
 An' fareweel, my Jamie, though my heart ye ha'e broken,
 Though ye may love anither ye will yet think on me ;
 My last gift will be, like a true lover's token,
 To clip my love locks in affection for thee.

JOHN FREELAND.

1826 1888.

JOHN FREELAND was born at Edinburgh in 1826 ; but while a mere infant the family removed to Bathgate, where his father went into business as a chemist and druggist. He was educated at the Bathgate Academy under the celebrated masters, Messrs Fairbairn and Dawson. On leaving school he learned the drug trade with his father, and thereafter proceeded to Glasgow, where, with the Apothecaries' Company, he gained a thorough knowledge of his vocation. He left this service to commence business for himself in Barrhead, and resided there for some twenty years ; but on the death of his father in 1869 he returned to Bathgate and succeeded to the business of chemist and druggist there, following it successfully till his death on 26th September, 1888.

His talent in versification was almost entirely devoted to themes of purely local interest, and as a writer of parodies he was probably unexcelled by any in the county. He was one of the original members of "Under the Beeches" Literary Society, at the meetings of which his verses, set to popular airs and treating of any subject which for the moment was full of engrossing interest, were productive of much amusement. "As a writer of verse he had a great fund of humour, play of fancy, and a keen sense of the ridiculous," writes one who knew him well ; but, withal, he was never one of those

"Who, for the poor renown of being smart,
Would leave a sting within a brother's heart."

A volume in which he retained copies of his effusions has, unfortunately, been irrecoverably lost; and although the two specimens of his muse here given are not very representative of his poetic ability, they must needs serve under the circumstances.

MY MITHER SENT ME TO THE WELL.

Written on reading the report of the medical officer of the Local Authority, which stated that the Bathgate water was contaminated with from 18 to 24 grains of organic matter per gallon.

Air "Robin Tamson's Smiddy."

My mither sent me to the well,
The water it was muddy;
She sent me wi' a sample o't
To oor auld doctor's study.
The doctor was a learnèd clerk,
And weel acquaint wi' Buchan;
Yet noo I ne'er gang by his door
But aye I fa' a-lauchin'.

He's fairly scunnered a' the folk
Wha drink the Bathgate water,
For he's declared there's something in 't
They ca' "Organic Matter!"
But when he telt me twenty grains
Ilk gallon had suspended,
I leuch sae lang the doctor thocht
I never wad hae ended.

The doctor girmed and shook his mell,
Quo' he, "My man, ye're merry;
But haud till my Report's in prent,
Ye'll see a hurry-burry."

He clauht his pow and stared sae wise
 As we stood baith thegither,
 And aye I nichered in his face,
 And said I'd tell my mither.

My mither met me at the door,
 Quo' she, "What's in the water?"
 "A beast," quo' I, "will kill us a',
 They ca' 'Organic Matter!'"
 "Nae mair shall water cross my craig,
 I'll gie't up a' thegither;
 There's table beer in Prestonpans,—
 I'll stick till 't," quo' my mither.

MORAL.

Guid whisky and the water, still
 I'll mix the twa thegither,
 And tak' a drap to creesh my hawse;
 I'm no fleyed like my mither.
 But, simple Burghers, dinna heed
 Hoo ither folk may blether;
 Tak' my advice, and follow aye
 The footsteps o' my mither.

A CUP O' TEA.

Written on hearing Rev. A. M. Wilson lecture on this subject.

You may lecture on Shakespeare, gi'e readin's on Burns,
 Discoorse on Sam Johnson and Buddha by turns:
 They're fushionless subjecks; they're naething to me;
 The subjeck that "draws" is a guid "Cup o' Tea."

The Prince o' Wales' trip, and yon lantern views
 May please the polite, and the young folks amuse:
 They're no to *my* taste—I wad far rather be
 Wi' auld Auntie Jean at a lecture on "Tea."

And Marriage and Coortship may tickle the ears
 O' young lads and lasses—I'm noo up in years—
 The subjeck that tak's best, as ony may see,
 Is a roosin' discoorse on a guid "Cup o' Tea."

THOMAS ORROCK.

Born 1827.

THOMAS ORROCK, the only child of poor yet respectable parents, was born at South Queensferry on the 20th day of February, 1827. He was grounded in his education at Dalmeny Parish School under the tuition of the late Mr Robert Burton ; but at the early age of ten he had to leave his boyhood behind him and face the realities of life. When fifteen years of age he went to learn shoemaking, to which he served his apprenticeship ; but on its completion he journeyed to Edinburgh and there served two years as a mason, on the expiry of which time he returned to the stool of St. Crispin. By his first wife, whom he married in 1849, Mr Orrock had a large family. The partner of his early struggles for independence died in 1891, and the poet again entered into "the bands and bliss of mutual love" some three years ago.

To the local press Mr Orrock contributed many of the poems which, in 1880, he issued in volume form under the title of *Forth's Lyrics and other Poems*. The volume is prefixed by an account of South Queensferry and its surroundings which is brimful of anecdotes and racy reminiscences of life in the ancient burgh.

In his poetic career Mr Orrock has benefited by the kindly patronage of Lord Rosebery and Lord Hopetoun, from whom on several occasions he has received tangible testimony of their interest in his productions.

For many years Mr Orrock has resided in Edinburgh, where he carries on business as a boot and shoe maker.

His muse may not soar "fancy's flight beyond the pole"; but he can sing us into a happier mood and make us forget the cares of life in his exuberant society. He can be pathetic too on occasion, and his nursery songs have that felicitous touch which can only spring from a lover of all that pertains to innocence and childhood.

THEY'RE A' LEAVIN'.

I'm lookin' back to ither days, the days o' long ago,
When the bloom o' youth was on yer cheek, my ain kind jo;
When a' oor bairns roond the fire sang their sangs wi' glee,
Toddled roond about the chairs, or climbed upon oor knee.

But they're a' leavin', leave, leave, leavin',
They're a' leavin' the auld folks at hame.

Thae were the happy days then, when ae door at nicht
Shut them a' in frae harm till the mornin' licht;
Nae fear then the world's snares would lead their feet astray,
But, oh! 'tis altered days noo since they hae gane away.

An' a' leavin', leave, leave, leavin',
They're a' leavin' the auld folks at hame.

The bonnie flowers that deck the earth an' used to mak' me glad,
Seem dowie noo an' hang their heids whenever I am sad;
A' nature noo seems gettin' auld, like me gaun doon the brae,
An' ilka jingle on the sneck to me aye seems to say,—

They're a' leavin', leave, leave, leavin',
They're a' leavin' the auld folks at hame.

The empty wee chair by the fire, the luggies 'mang the delf,
The auld slate upon the nail, the schule-books on the shelf,
The very tinnies on the wa' when parritch time comes roond
Are ever ringin' in my ears wi' nae uncertain soond—

They're a' leavin', leave, leave, leavin',
They're a' leavin' the auld folks at hame.

I dinna say I'd like to fecht the battle ower again,
 But, oh ! I like the smile and lauch o' a wee bit wean,
 Ay, even the skelp upon the face, the cuddle, an' the kiss,
 That mak' the toils o' matrimony a paradise o' bliss ;
 But they're a' leavin', leave, leave, leavin',
 They're a' leavin' the auld folks at hame.

But blessin's on the penny post, I lo'e the postman's tirl,
 For, oh ! the sweet soond o' his voice mak's a' my heart-strings dirl ;
 Tho' some there be wha hae forgot there's sic a thing as ink
 An' carena for the auld folk that scarce can sleep a wink :
 For they're a' leavin', leave, leave, leavin',
 They're a' leavin' the auld folks at hame.

THERE'S MAIR WHAUR IT CAM' FRAE.

The bairns are a' in bed, guidwife,
 An' ilk yin's sleepin' soond ;
 The loaf will get a rest, guidwife,
 Till mornin' it comes roond.
 Ye'll dae the same the morn, guidwife,
 As ye hae dune the day ;
 Jist whittle doon the loaf, guidwife,
 There's mair whaur it cam' frae.
 There's mair whaur it cam' frae, guidwife,
 There's mair whaur it cam' frae ;
 Jist whittle doon the loaf, guidwife,
 There's mair whaur it cam' frae.

There's a mystery in it a', guidwife,
 We canna easily trace ;
 As sune as ae loaf's dune, guidwife,
 Anither tak's its place.
 Sae, as ilk morn it comes, guidwife,
 Ye'll tak' the loaf an' say,—
 Hae, bairns, ye're welcome to a slice,
 There's mair whaur it cam' frae.

Nae matter hoo mony weans, guidwife,
 We hae to fill wi' meat,
 The Unseen Hand brings in, guidwife,
 Enough for a' to eat.
 He gi'es us health an' strength, guidwife,
 To fight life's stormy fray ;
 His promise He will keep, guidwife,—
 There's mair whaur it cam' frae.

'Tis like the Warren Well, guidwife,
 That never yet ran dry ;
 Waste not,,but look abune, guidwife,
 There's manna in the sky.
 He sent us lots o' weans, guidwife,
 Wi' bite an' brattie tae—
 I'm prood their jaws can gang, guidwife,
 There's mair whaur it cam' frae.

He sends the breath o' spring, guidwife,
 Winter's icy hand to thaw ;
 Sends dew an' genial rain, guidwife,
 Mak's flowers an' buds to blaw.
 Bright summer comes, an' hairst, guidwife,
 Wi' fruits in fine array,
 An' grain to let us see, guidwife,
 There's mair whaur it cam' frae.

The sparrow canna fa', guidwife,
 Withoot oor Faither's leave,
 He never sends an arm, guidwife,
 Withoot sendin' a sleeve.
 'Tis only we oorsel's, guidwife,
 Oor pairt oft contrar play ;
 Unbelief blinds the eyes, guidwife,
 There's mair whaur it cam' frae.

For laziness an' pride, guidwife,
 Bring aye their ain reward,
 An' to oor station here, guidwife,
 We should hae due regard.
 Buckle oor armour on, guidwife,
 An' discontentment slay,
 An' sing aloud this sang, guidwife,
 There's mair whaur it cam' frae.

The mornin' it has come, guidwife,
 Noo jist tak' ye the knife,
 An' gi'e them a' a wee bit piece
 Jist to keep in the life
 Until the parritch time, guidwife,
 When each their spune maun hae
 To sup them up as if, guidwife,
 There's mair whaur they cam' frae.
 There's mair whaur they cam' frae, guidwife,
 There's mair whaur they cam' frae;
 To sup them up as if, guidwife,
 There's mair whaur they cam' frae.

THE LADDIE'S STOCK.

See yonder sprightly little chappie
 Standin' at his daddie's knee,
 Nae earthly monarch half sae happy,
 His stock in han' a broon bawbee.

O'er his prize he seems to chuckle,
 His face lit up wi' joyfu' glee,
 The wee fat han' scarce shows a knuckle
 As he grasps the broon bawbee.

Nae doot the laddie has a notion
 Nae millionaire sae rich as he—
 Could buy ilk ship that sails the ocean
 Wi' his bonnie broon bawbee;

A braw new coatie for his daddie ;
 A kite high in the air to flee ;
 His mammy dress, too, like a leddie,
 Aff his bonnie broon bawbee.

The laddie is nae idle dreamer,
 He's in earnest we can see ;
 Want o' knowledge mak's the schemer
 Sae muckle dae wi' his bawbee.

In ae sense he's but a sample
 O' much aulder folk there be
 Biggin' churches, gran' an' ample,
 A' wi' ither folks' bawbee.

Yet he hurts nane wi' his schemin',
 Nae manager o' bank is he ;
 He ruins nae orphans wi' his dreamin',
 Nor tak's the widow's last bawbee.

He keeps nae carriage nor a flunkie ;
 Altho' his kite it flees fu' hie
 Its doon-come widna hurt a donkey,
 Nor rob the world o' ae bawbee.

TIME—A FRAGMENT.

Old Time, the thief who steals our years,
 Steals all our joys beside,
 And leaves us nought but bitter tears,
 And humbled selfish pride.

Ah ! did I say a thief is Time ?
 No, Time is honest ever ;
 In every form and every clime
 Old Time he changeth never.

'Tis we who steal from Time, and say
 We only came to borrow ;
 Spend what we took on loan to-day,
 And steal again to-morrow.

“Old” I withdraw : I find no trace
Of age upon his brow ;
He was as old when earth in space
First rolled as he is now.

And when this earth has rolled away
Time will be young as ever ;
He had no birth, knows no decay
Forever and forever.

HENRY SHANKS.

Born 1829.

HENRY SHANKS, "the Blind Poet of the Deans," was born on the 30th of December, 1829, at Meadowhead on Boghead estate, near Bathgate, where his father followed the combined occupations of a farmer, grazier and grain dealer. Six years later the family removed to the farm of Deans on the estate of Boghall, three miles to the east of Bathgate. At an early age he attended the Parish School, and after a short term there was transferred to the Bathgate Academy, where he received that education which this noted institution was, and continues to be, famed for. On attaining the age of sixteen he was apprenticed to the oil, paint, colour and drysaltery trade in Leith, which occupation he followed for eleven years when he returned to the parental roof. In the following year (1858) his father died, and this, the poet tells us, was the first occasion on which he made any sustained attempt in poetic composition, although he had been in the habit of rhyming from his school-days. The labours of the farm were relieved during his leisure hours by the recreations of reading, music and drawing; and to his proficiency as an artist some specimens of his work which adorn his present abode still bear ready testimony. About this time he began contributing to the Poet's Corner of the *Airdrie Advertiser*, and soon acquired some degree of fame as a poet. Towards the end of 1862 a slight defect began to make itself apparent in the sight of his left eye: a cloud came before the sun, and within a

year the curtains of night were drawn around his vision. Of this sad calamity he affectingly tells us in his Memoir :—
“I had now to face, with whatever fortitude I could muster, the melancholy certainty that in a few months at furthest I would be for ever shut out from the glorious light of heaven ; that the fair face of Nature and all forms of grace and beauty would be to me henceforth only a memory, and that I must grope for the remainder of my existence in total darkness. This fate was too surely mine, for before the close of 1863 I was totally, hopelessly, and helplessly blind.” From the depths of his dejection he composed his “Ode to Despondency,” which concludes with the prayer,—

Oh ! would I could die !
Oh ! my God !
And change for the sky
My abode :
By the wild sea wave
I will earnestly crave
Relief through the grave
From my load.

But though thus voicing his despair in being excluded from the beauty of the world, he did not allow despondency to settle or set its seal upon his soul, and like the imprisoned lark he began to sing sweetly in his captivity—brightening his own lot and giving songs of cheer to the hearts of his fellowmen. By the aid of his “Stick” he was soon enabled to “wander by the lone roadside,” and in this manner managed to extract some degree of pleasure from his surroundings. He now also began to cultivate assiduously his faculty for poetry, and so successful was he in his wooing of the Muses that a volume of poetry was

issued towards the close of 1868—James Ballantine, the author of *Ilka Blade o' Grass* and many other lyric gems, kindly undertaking the labour of piloting it through the press. The favourable reception of this little work encouraged the author to further flights of fancy, and in 1872 these were issued from the press of Messrs Baird & Hamilton, Airdrie. The success of this second volume exceeded all expectation, for in a few weeks it had to be followed by a second edition which was also readily disposed of—affording the author the satisfaction of knowing that his efforts were appreciated by the critics and the public at large. In 1874 “Under the Beeches” Literary Society was formed in Bathgate with Mr Shanks as president—a position which he held with honour till his retirement at the end of last session. The Society, which takes its name from the poet’s musing ground, was the means of bringing out his literary abilities in a new direction, viz., as a prose composer and public speaker—duties incumbent upon him in his presidential capacity. He found his memory become wonderfully retentive in the delivery of the several lectures which he contributed from time to time, and this encouraged him to seek a wider sphere. In 1877 he considerably extended the lectures on “Burns, as a Man and a Poet,” and on “The Life, Character, and Literary Career of James Hogg, the Ettrick Shepherd,” and publicly delivered them in Bathgate and Airdrie to large audiences. In both towns the lectures were received with enthusiasm, and though each occupied two hours in delivery the memory of the poet never once failed him. Regarded as a literary work they are of very high merit, and show a critical acumen and keen estimate of each poet’s place and power. It is

safe to say that no better appreciation of the Ettrick Shepherd has yet appeared. These lectures naturally created a desire for their preservation, and to satisfy this demand *The Peasant Poets of Scotland, with Musings Under the Beeches* was published in 1881. The volume, which includes a Memoir and portrait of the author, contains, besides the two lectures named, essays on Minor Peasant Poets and his selected poems. His poems are marked by manly and vigorous expression, and, when one considers the disadvantages attached to their long retention on the mind ere being committed to paper, they possess a finish and harmony that is indeed remarkable.

The selections which we give render any criticisms or opinions of our own entirely unnecessary. Two of these—*The Hebridean Exile's Dream* and *The Star of Remembrance*—have been recast by the author since their first appearance and set to music by himself. It is sufficient to say that they have won the appreciation of Alan Reid, F.E.I.S., editor of the *National Choir*, in which musical miscellany several other lyrics of the poet have appeared.

In 1880 Mr Shanks removed from the Deans farm to Kirkton Lodge—a pretty little embowered cottage about a mile east of Bathgate, where, under the kindly care of Mrs Orr, the widow of an old Deans servant, who resides over the way and acts as his amanuensis, he contrives in various ways to enjoy many of the felicities of life.

As the poet is possessed of a genial disposition and an extensive knowledge of the literature of his country, Kirkton Lodge has long been the place of pilgrimage for the rhyming brotherhood of the district. Lengthy appreciative notices of the author and his works have

appeared in the *People's Friend* and in *Modern Scottish Poets*. In the preparation of the present work the editor has been greatly indebted to Mr Shanks both for information and for access to his valuable scrap-books, from which we are able to reproduce much that otherwise would have been lost. We take this opportunity of acknowledging these kindnesses, and of recording our cordial thanks for the same.

TO STARKIE.¹

As up High Bathgate Street you spiel,
 And 'fore a wee snug theekit biel',
 You spy a queer auld farrant chiel,
 Striped to the sarkie,
 Boring a pump wi' cautious skeel—
 That's him—that's Starkie.

It wad indeed be something queer,
 If wha is Starkie you need spier;
 For ilka wife, baith far and near,
 That owns a wheel,
 And some wha are na wives, I fear,
 Ken Starkie weel.

A heels-ower-heid, kind-hearted birkie
 Is worthy, decent, honest Starkie;
 And dwalls a patriotic sparkie
 Within his breast;
 For Rantin' Robin's rhymin' wark aye
 An enthusiast.

¹ John Stark, a Burns enthusiast; known among the older generation as a manufacturer of spinning-wheels, &c., and to us boys as the best maker of "peeries" that ever lived! He died 30th Dec. 1881, aged 75 years.

When Joiner Tam¹ and he forgather,
 A kindred spirit—sic anither—
 They'll sit far on for days thegither
 O'er glass hobnobbin';
 Their tongues it wad be vain to tether
 When loosed on Robin.

Those twin enthusiasts agree
 That Robin fairly taps the tree;
 A' ither bards maun bow the knee
 When Robin sings;
 He is, and evermore shall be,
 The king o' kings.

Some say they gang ayont the score
 In praise o' him they baith adore,
 And stretch frae days to weeks the splore;
 I dinna ken!
 They're Scotsmen to the very core—
 The wale o' men.

And gif it should, as chance it may,
 Be Januar's five-an'-twentieth day—
 The poet's anniversary—
 You'll find his biggin'
 Deck'd out in flag and holly gay,
 Frae base to riggin'.

And Starkie, dress'd wi' conscious pride,
 His workin' tools a' thrown aside;
 Frae early morn till eventide
 Men, wives, and laddies
 Thrang thro' his door, thrown open wide,
 To pree his haggis.

¹ Thomas Anderson, died 13th May, 1896, aged 75. He was chiefly noteworthy as an inordinate Burns enthusiast, and it is in keeping with this phase of his character that he has left the bulk of his property, amounting to about £1000, as a contribution to the fund which is being raised for the erection of Orphan Cottage Homes in Mauchline, as a Memorial to the National Bard.

Before the door set out to view,
 In hodden grey and bonnet blue,
 Stands Scotia's Bardie at the plough,—
 And Starkie made it ;
 A bit o' wark a' maun allow
 Does him great credit.

Within his wee snug biggin' hing
 Fu' mony a queer nick-nacket thing :
 Auld Mother Eve's first weddin' ring,
 As guid as new ;
 The very stane—the very sling
 Goliath slew.

Auld-fashion'd guns, and swurds, and bows—
 A buss o' broom frae Cowdenknowes ;
 The cloot o' ane o' Robin's cows ;
 The hempen tether
 That strangled Mailie, ewe o' ewes !
 And Mailie's blether.

Some auld thack frae the poet's house ;
 The fud o' puir wee wounded puss ;
 The daisy, and the cowerin' mouse
 O' Robin's sonnet ;
 And guid preserve's ! the very louse
 O' Missy's bonnet.

There's Doctor Hornbook's lang kail gully ;
 Tam Sampson's gun, the poachin' billy ;
 A prayer-book that to Holy Willie
 Did aince belang ;
 The mantle o' the Muse o' Coila,
 Sae rich and lang.

There's sticks frae Nith and stanes frae Doon ;
 A cowl that hapt the Souter's croon ;
 Bauld Tam o' Shanter's mare's hint shoon,
 And Meg's grey tail ;
 Wee Davock's carritches and spoon,
 And Rab's ain flail.

There 's Cæsar's collar,—Luath's lugs :
 That pair o' maist sagacious dugs—
 Wi' ane o' creeshie flannel rugs
 Clad witch's doup ;
 Wi' twa o' Poesie Nancie's jugs,
 And mutchkin stoup.

'Twad need a catalogue to mention
 The items o' his rare collection :
 In truth, I'm open to correction
 If lee I 'm tellin' ;
 But there they are, free to inspection,
 In Starkie's dwellin'.

Come then, ye bards, and tune your lays
 In Starkie's honour, Starkie's praise,
 Till Avon's banks and Avon's braes
 Ring wi' the din :
 There 's few in these degenerate days
 Like him you 'll fin'.

Fill high a bumper to the brim,
 And drink wi' me lang life to him ;
 We lo'e him and his every whim,
 The worthy birkie ;
 May ne'er dull care or sorrow dim
 The e'e o' Starkie.

SONG OF THE WAR FIEND.

Last night in my dreams I was wafted away
 To Alsace and fair Lorraine,
 And I saw by the pale wan light of the moon
 The mangled heaps of the slain
 That lay without shroud, 'neath the drifting cloud,
 On the ghastly battle plain.

It seemed as if over a harvest field
Had swept the hurricane blast,
And had dashed to the earth the bound shocks of grain,
Infuriate as it passed.
The vale of the Rhine made a Moloch shrine,
And her sons the Holocaust.

And there lay the rider, and there the steed,
' Side by side 'neath the midnight skies ;
But their hearts were now still, and the light had fled
From their fixed and glassy eyes ;
And there came a sound from the blood-stained ground,
The moan of the sacrifice.

A cold shudder ran thro' my veins, and the sweat
Stood in huge drops on my brow,
As I looked on that reeking altar of death,
Of deep, heart-rending woe :
Where, where are the bands ? where the helping hands
Of the red-cross army now ?

But hark ! yet another more terrible sound !—
The sound of hilarious glee
Rises high o'er the field and jars on the sense :
Say, whence this wild revelry ?
'Tis the grim high priest—at his bloody feast
He holdeth high jubilee !

Now the groans of the dying and wounded's shrieks
To the heedless winds were flung ;
But they caught up the strain of the war-fiend's song,
And the hills their echoes rung
With the savage glee of his minstrelsy,
And this was the song he sung :—

“ Oh, I am the king of the passions wild ;
I reign in the breast of Hate ;
I stir up the strife of war to the knife
In the envious and irate ;
And I play out my game in Jehovah's name
From the mouth of the Potentate.

“ I sit me enthroned on the cannon’s breech,—
My sceptre the flaming sword ;
And tremble proud nations when I approach ;
They quake at my lightest word ;
And I dash me the crown of the tyrant down
Who refuseth to own me lord.

“ I revel in carnage, revel in blood,
And bear in my mailed hand
The rifle, the sword, and the bayonet,
The lance and the blazing brand ;
While close at my heel come my cannon of steel,
With a stern and determined band.

“ Like the rush of a great and mighty wind
I sweep o’er the battle plain ;
And thousands of warriors bite the dust,
Struck down by my leaden rain ;
And I crush ’neath the feet of my chargers fleet
The wounded, the dying and slain.

“ I scream with delight when the peasants fly
From their village all in flames ;
I laugh at the widows’ and orphans’ tears,
At the fears of courtly dames ;
While I reap at a breath my harvest of death
Of the proudest and noblest names.

“ Not alone on the shore I show my power,—
I ride on the wide blue sea ;
And I sweep from the deep the peaceful fleet
Of commerce and industry :
Peace and pity I spurn for mercy I’ve none—
Oh ! who is a king like to me ?

“ Then sing ho ! sing ho ! for the field of strife !
Sing ho ! for the crimson flood !
Sing ho ! merry ho ! for the carnival,—
For the glorious feast of blood !
And sing ho, ho-ho-ho ! for a nation’s woe,—
For dynasties nipped in the bud !

"To the front ! to the front !" screamed the fierce war fiend,
When ended his savage lay ;
"To the front ! to the front ! for I scent afar
The blood of the battle fray :
'Tis a kingly draught—ha, ha !" and he laughed—
"Ha, ha ! to the front—away !
"I will drain to the dregs the o'erflowing cup !"
He cried with delight supreme,
As he spread his huge wings on the blast, and fled
With a hideous yell and scream.
A horror cry woke, and thankfully broke
The agony of my dream.

THE OLD IRISH REAPER.

When the hills and the valleys bright Autumn arrays
In rich glowing mantles of purple and gold,
I heave a deep sigh for those halcyon days
When bould Paddy went trotting along the highways
Light, joyous and free to the harvest of old.

He had left his own home in the land of the west
To bear us a hand, and his friendship to prove ;
Oh, who would not gladly give welcome and rest
To the soldier of peace on an errand so blest,
And bid him God-speed on his journey of love ?

Why leaves not the reaper his own native shore ?
Oh, why doth he linger on banks of the Foyle ?
Is the Scotland to-day not the Scotland of yore ?—
Our harvests less fruitful ? or love we no more
The light-hearted sons of the Emerald Isle ?

I gaze on the road, but I gaze now in vain,—
Not a trace of the old Irish reaper I see ;
But high o'er the fields of the ripe, rustling grain
Comes the clatter of reaping machines from the plain ;
But bould Pat with his hook was the darling for me.

As he came from the shores of ould Erin's green isle,
 His hook wrapt in straw neatly under his arm ;
 His face ever wreathed in a good-natured smile,
 His rollicking wit, and the illigint style
 Of the garments he wore, had a ne'er-failing charm.

His picturesque figure how can I forget ?
 Still unclouded and clear my remembrance of him ;
 His cheery " Good mornin' ! " to all whom he met ;
 His ould battered beaver, so jauntily set,
 That was graced wid a pipe, but wid never a brim.

His coat, gaily mended with patches a score,
 And colours as many as Joseph's ov ould,
 Was a study complete : " By St. Patrick ! " he swore,
 " This idintical coat my great-grandfather wore,
 And my childer will, afther I'm buried and could ! "

And thin for the brogues and the breeches ov Pat :
 His toes through the rints did the fresh air enjoy ;
 The wind whistled free in the place where he sat,
 And mighty convaynient intoirely was that :
 Oh ! a picture all over was Paddy, the boy !
 And see him in Brynies,¹ how earnest he'd look
 On the big-bellied pot as the praties did boil ;
 But diggin', and eatin', and handlin' the hook,—
 Ay, and fightin',—were tricks that from Nature he took
 Wid the first breath he drew on the banks of the Foyle.

He is gone ! he is past ! like a sound on the blast,—
 Like a shore-broken wave, like a tale that is told ;
 The broom of Dame Progress hath caught him at last
 And swept him away ; but a gem of the past
 Was the stout Irish reaper—the reaper of old.
 Around his loved form like a garland entwine
 The bright sunny mem'ries of life's early morn,
 When the old harvest band, like a regiment in line
 With their bright gleaming blades, in a chorus would join,
 And the song of the reaper was heard from the corn.

¹ Irish term for bothy.

There was life, there was heart, there was soul in the scene,
 And, lest of our progress too freely we boast,
 Ere we count up the gains of unfeeling machine
 Let us feelingly value the old that hath been,
 And bear in remembrance the good we have lost.

My love for the reaper will never grow chill,
 And as pensive I wander by meadow and brook
 When the deep-purple heather waves high on the hill.
 And golden fields gladden the plain, I will still
 Think kindly of Pat and the old reaping hook.

THE HEBRIDEAN EXILE'S DREAM.

In my log cabin in Canadian wildwood,
 When through the pine trees moans the eerie wind,
 My thoughts fly back unto my days of childhood,
 To home and friends for ever left behind.
 Where Scur-na-Gilleaen braves the wintry weather,
 And round Ben More the howling tempest raves,
 And where in glory blooms the purple heather,
 There sleep my fathers in their island graves.
Chorus—Land of the clansmen ! true and loyal-hearted :
 Land of the brave, the noble, and the free !
 Land of my childhood ! though for ever parted,
 The exile's heart still fondly clings to thee.

Oft in my dreams I roam my native island,
 Dearer to me than all the world beside,
 For still my heart is true, my heart is Highland,
 And glows my breast with all a clansman's pride :
 Fondly I linger by the lonely shieling
 Around whose walls my early footsteps strayed,
 Then up the silent glen at gloamin' stealing
 I clasp once more my own dear Highland maid.
 Land of the clansmen, &c.

I see the billows from the wild Atlantic
 Dashed into foam upon the rock-bound shore,
 Or watch the eagle scared from cliffs gigantic,
 And, screaming wildly, to the zenith soar.
 Round the turf fire I list to song and story
 Of dauntless chiefs of old Clanranald's line,
 Or hear from aged sires the vanished glory
 That clustered round Iona's sacred shrine.
 Land of the clansmen, &c.

High 'mong the rocks the sheep and goats are bleating ;
 Cattle are browsing by the mountain stream ;
 Old friends and neighbours give me kindly greeting,
 And I am happy, happy in my dream !
 But with the waking comes the thought that never
 My feet shall tread the Hebridean strand,
 For I have left my native hills for ever,
 And dwell an exile from my fathers' land.
 Land of the clansmen ! true and loyal-hearted ;
 Land of the brave, the noble and the free !
 Land of my childhood ! though for ever parted,
 The exile's heart still fondly clings to thee.

THE STAR OF REMEMBRANCE.

On the night that we parted, my Mary,
 When the salt tears bedimmed your bright eye,
 Do you mind how you pointed, my Mary,
 To a bright little star in the sky ?
 How we promised each night in the year, love,
 When the shades of the evening drew nigh,
 To steal out and to gaze for a while, love,
 On that bright little star in the sky ?
 That gem in the robe of the sky,
 That shrine set aloft in the sky,
 It reminds me of love and my Mary,
 That mentor aloft in the sky.

And as ever upon it I gaze, love,
 Do I fancy the glance of your eye
 Is reflected to me from the lift, love,
 By that bright little star in the sky ;
 And it seems still to say to my heart, love,
 Though dark clouds now around you may fly,
 Fear you not ! for I'm still keeping watch, love,
 From my turret aloft in the sky.
 That mirror aloft in the sky,
 That warder aloft in the sky, —
 'Tis the star of remembrance, my Mary,
 That mentor aloft in the sky.

THE RE-ENLISTMENT.

Oh, where are you going, dear Patrick,
 That you're packing your bundle up so ?
 Would you leave your ould mother in Ireland ?
 No, Patrick, my darlin', don't go.
 I know you've been talking with Murphy,
 That Yankee deceiver and spy ;
 But don't you believe him, dear Patrick,
 Every truth that he spakes is a lie.

'Tis nothing but bouncin' and blarney,
 Their talk about rations and pay ;
 Sure their gould's just a durty bit paper
 That won't pay an ounce of green tay :
 'Tis only for fightin' they want yez,
 And in troth that's an Irishman's right ;
 But it is for repealin' the Union,
 Not to patch up a Union, they fight.

Not a hap'orth the better, belave me,
 Will you there be than where you are now ;
 Sure there's praties enough in ould Ireland,
 Wid butter-milk fresh from the cow ;

And Kathleen, your sweet little charmer,
 When she hears her dear Patrick's away,
 Will marry some jintleman farmer
 Wid sense in ould Ireland to stay.

Then Patrick, dear, listen to reason,
 Get them notions quick out of your head,—
 Sure, you're better a poor boy in Ireland
 Than a captain out there, if you're dead !
 But if you're for fightin', you spalpeen,
 There's sticks in the county Kildare,
 Then give that ould villain a beatin'
 Wid your blackthorn at Donnybrook Fair.

Hooray, boys ! you're safe by that token,—
 For I know well that glance in your eye
 Meant mischief wid your father before yez,
 And why not wid his son now, say I ?
 But I'm wastin' good time now in talkin',
 And Kathleen will share in my joy ;
 So get her consint to the weddin',
 And my blessin' be wid you, my boy.

BIRTH AND DEATH OF THE BATHGATE *HOOLET*.

(A paper whose first sheet proved also its winding-sheet).

Last night I had a curious dream :
 Methought I heard a *Hoolet* scream ;
 And as the fledgling bird flew past
 It gasping sobbed upon the blast,
 Pray, Bathgate folks, attend !—
 This is my first—this is my last—
 Beginning and my end !

EPITAPH.

Here lies the *Hoolet*, tattered, torn :
 A bird that vainly tried
 To raise a screech when it was born,
 And with the effort died.

JAMES GARDNER.

JAMES GARDNER, the author of the following verses, is a native of Bathgate, where he is a solicitor and Procurator Fiscal. He began to rhyme when about twelve years of age and has been a frequent contributor of verse to newspapers and journals for a great number of years; but has not yet seen fit to issue these in book form. During election times his satirical pen has often been a thorn in the flesh of the party opposed to him in the political arena, and, indeed, though offering but little criterion of his ability as a poet, it is by these effusions that he is most widely known. He has always been a keen and successful curler and bowler and is recognised as the laureate of the Bathgate Curling and Bowling Clubs, and of the Torphichen Kilwinning Lodge No. 13, in which he has held the position of Right Worshipful Master seven or eight times. He is at present the President of "Under the Beeches" Literary Society of which he has been a member since its inception. He has the happy gift of rhyming extemporaneously, and seldom a convivial meeting at which he is present breaks up without a "verse all round" on the company. It is to be hoped that Mr Gardner will, some day soon, collect and publish his poetical effusions and his reminiscences of Bathgate. *Bonnie Jean* and *The Bonnie Wee Blossom* are exquisite little songs, and both have been finely set to music by his friend Henry Shanks, the gifted poet of the Deans.

KING FROST.

Now charming Flora's gane to rest
 And closed her lovely e'e,
 And dreams aboot her lovers a'
 Assembled round the tee;
 While Boreas snug has rowed her in
 His plaid o' driven snaw,
 And tents the lassie as she sleeps
 Cauld winter hours awa'.

Chorus—Then let us pledge oor Norland King
 Wi' Caledonian glee,
 Whase sceptre is the waving cove,
 Whase throne is on the tee.

His castles bright, on land and sea,
 In nameless beauty stand,
 Their glacier-turrets pierce the lift
 Be-mockin' human hand;
 Created in a winter night,
 Sae wonderfully fair,
 Yet swift as he adjourns his courts
 They vanish into air.

What king but he can live and dee
 And wake to life again,—
 Can hush the breeze and still the seas,
 And bind the fretful main?
 The birds and flowers in glens and bowers
 His conqu'ring power can tell;
 Whene'er he lowers all nature cowers
 Beneath his magic spell.

Attendant now, wi' a' his knights,
 He's on the icy plain;
 His voice is warbling loud and sweet
 In every channel-stane;

And straggling wild his hoary locks
To fan the less'ning day,—
His one delight, to Scotland dear,
The curlers' roarin' play !

Give cheer for Scotia's darling game ;
The willing welkin ring :
The broom, the ice, the curling stane
Forever let her sing !
May ilka year oor manly sports
Hold on to merry spring,
And be the o'ercome o' oor lay—
Long live oor Norland King !


BONNIE JEAN.

The wee harebell ayont the fell,
The lily by the sparkling well,
Aye borrow diamonds frae the sky
To busk themsel's when she trips by,—
In love wi' bonnie Jean.

The violet blooming in her e'e
Has aften 'witched the ling'ring bee,
And am'rous winds maun halt a wee
Her temptsome, mellow mou' to pree,—
In love wi' bonnie Jean.

The spell-bound mavis lies in wait
To hear her chant my future fate,
Syne sweet within yon spreading tree
Love's thrilling tale repeats to me—
In love wi' bonnie Jean.

Ye'd think the drumlie sun gaed doon
As jealous o' the waukrife moon ;
The warld sae fond, wi' joy awake,
Rowed nicht and day for her ain sake,
In love wi' bonnie Jean.



But noo they've a' a spite at me—
 The flowers, the birds, the wind, the bee,
 Sun, moon, and warld, wi' wicked speed,
 Are wishin' a' that I was deid,
 Wha stole their bonnie Jean.

THE BONNIE WEE BLOSSOM.

'Tis thine, honest winter, o'er valleys and mountains
 To spread upon a' things cauld mantles o' snaw,
 To vex a' the trees and to seal the clear fountains,
 Untune the blythe birdies, the flooers chase awa'.

But spare, oh ! proud winter, the bonnie wee blossom
 That's burstin' in beauty, the pride o' yon vale :
 Thy breath dinna steer it, oh ! dinna gang near it
 To blind it wi' snawdrift or dash it wi' hail !

I love thee, grand winter, in peace or commotion,
 When hushing the rose or the waters asleep,
 Or hounding the levin thro' star-frichtit heaven,
 When riding the blind-winds or coursing the deep.

Oh ! spare, then, dread winter, the bonnie wee blossom
 That's purity's ainsel', tho' rigid thy law ;
 Or let but ae snawflake alicht on her bosom
 When thou art comparing the white o' thy snaw !

How weel thou lov'st Lily I marked by thy tokens
 Bespangling her garden, festooning her cot ;
 How safely thou led'st her across the deep river
 That nicht she consented to fa' to my lot.

When next thou'rt presenting chaste flowers at her window,
 Oh ! stay till she waukens and hear my love sing ;
 Thou'lt cast thy cauld plaidie and a' thy bright jewels,
 And kneel down beside her bedewed into spring !

LIFE AND DEATH.

When the tender babe and helpless
Breathes of life the vital breath,
Twins the mother then gives birth to,
And their names are Life and Death.

Life pursues its course erratic,
Fleeting fleeter than the wind ;
Death swift-chasing gluts the minutes
Thoughtless life doth fling behind.

Death still follows like a shadow,
'Tis no matter where we roam ;
Closely pressing while in battle,
Dimly distant while at home.

Day and night, unwearied, steady,
Watching, lurking everywhere,—
On the felon's gibbet perching,
Nestling on the bosom fair.

O'er the ancient furrowed forehead
You will find him curling there ;
Bridging o'er the curving shoulders,
Peeping through the snowy hair.

While o'er love, in beauty's garden,
Spin the giddy, golden hours,
Thriftily he keeps transplanting
To his endless bed of flowers.

At his beck the conscious flow'ret
Droops amid the radiant host ;
'Tis the tender, spotless beauty
He doth love and worship most.

Few the homes in cot or palace
But his footprints have been there,
Leaving sad bereavement—pointing
To the lonely vacant chair.

Fathers, mothers, wives and children,
Till the harvest-time is done,
Fall beneath his hissing sickle,
Green or mellow—everyone.

Man in vain erects his bulwark
Death's swift stream to set aside ;
Every rampart overleaping,
Nought withstands the hungry tide.

Doubly though our lives be guarded
And our paths with flowers be strewn,
Ne'er a moment past the present
Can frail mortal count his own.

Life's a kite whose measured string may
Mount it to the ether blue :
Silently Death sits beneath it,
Winding up the fatal clew.

Nor is man his only victim :
Dwellers all beneath the sun,
Moving, breathing, vegetating,
Death doth reckon all as one.

When the bursting clouds with lightning
Rake the boundless fields of air ;
Carve the brows of giant mountains ;
Lay the face of nature bare :

He, astride the flashing coursers,
Rides with tremulous delight,
Spreading doleful desolation
In his momentary flight.

Not in units but in billions
Hourly he devours his prey ;
Sate never, craving ever—
Onward to the latest day.

Death will then, by Life o'er-mastered,
Perish in earth's final scene,
And depart with the creation
As if he had never been.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON.

1832-1895.

ALEXANDER HAMILTON was born at the farm of Kirkton Mains, near Bathgate, on 20th August, 1832. He received his education at the Bathgate Academy, and thereafter settled down to the labours of the farm. On retiring from Kirkton Mains about twenty years ago, he, with his sister, who is also imbued with his love for poetry, took possession of Kirkroads Cottage, where, in the cultivation of his well-tended garden, he found the work most congenial to his tastes. One of the interesting traits of his character was his love and care for birds and cats, among the succeeding generations of which he had many pets, and for which on their departure from life there was a little plot of ground reserved in the front garden which he quaintly designated "The Graves of a Household." From his mother he inherited a love for the ballad literature of Scotland, and with this rude region of romance he was probably better acquainted than any other in the county. In this respect he could re-echo the sentiment expressed by Sir Philip Sidney:—"Certainly, I must confess mine own barbarousness; I never heard the old song of Percy and Douglas, that I found not my heart moved more than with a trumpet."¹ Possessed of a very retentive memory, he had a wonderful store of ballads and legendary lore, to the beauties of which the rising

¹ *An Apologie for Poetrie*: 1581.

generation is, to a great extent, sublimely ignorant. With Dunbar, Lindsay and Douglas he was as familiar as with Ramsay, Fergusson and Burns. Indeed all his literary inclinations lay with the poets and poetry of the past, and his own productions are naturally marked by the force and quaintness of expression which characterise the early "makars." For many years he contributed largely to the *West Lothian Courier* in the form of "Songs and Ballads," "A Rhyming History of Bathgate," "Bathgate Characters," and miscellaneous poems. These possess a certain ruggedness of rhythm that may not satisfy the cultured fastidious ear; but in them the discerning reader will be able to appreciate their own peculiar charm, and own that

"Though his artless strains he rudely sings,
And throws his hand uncouthly o'er the strings,
He glows with all the spirit of the bard."

In the autumn of 1895 he caught a chill while working in his garden, and to its effects he ultimately succumbed on 24th October. He was laid to rest in Livingston Churchyard, where many generations of his ancestors repose in "the sweet seducing pause of Death's long dream."

A FIRST OF MAY AT MOUNTEERIE.¹

Nae witch nor warlock noo is seen
On Beltane's dewy morn,
Nae tether stown by cantrip airt,
Nor scowther'd bauks o' corn.

¹ On the morning of the first of May and the evening preceding it, known as Beltan or Beltane, the fairies were supposed to possess the power of inflicting evil on those who had treated or spoken of them disrespectfully.

It wasna sae in days gane by,
And that the farmers kent,
When witches on their rag-weed steeds
Cam' scourin' ower the bent.

I've heard the auld folk often say
A Durbar aince was held,
To sit in session on a witch
Wha had 'gainst Nick rebelled.

The rendezvous and meeting place,
The howe below Mounteerie,
The northmost point o' Sauters' Road,
A place baith dull and dreary.

The Deil and Major Weir were there,
Dalyell and Grannie Gruntin,
Peace-Morning frae the Ochil hills,
And Warlock Tam frae Brunton.¹

Auld Hornie frae his wallet drew
His Black-Book's horrid scroll,
And read her sentence there aloud
Wi' fiendish grin and scowl.

The Major claught her by the lug,
And ower the hill he's gane,
And rowed her down ower Witchcraig brae,
And felled her wi' a stane.

And what a tempest there arose
O' fire and wind and hail,
Whilk stripped the forest o' its trees,
And shook baith hill and dale.

Puir hawkie trembled at the stake
In terror and in dread ;
The auld brood-soo brak' doun the crue
And lap into the lade.

¹ Celebrated warlocks and witches in ballad lore.

The doors flew open wi' a bang
And coup'd the cream, I ween,
While kirns and chesswells high in air
Abune the hoose were seen.

Auld Saunders ran for Ranter's shoe,
And Meg for rowan tree ;
They clapt them in the parritch pat,
And hung it on the swee ;

And poured in wine and puddock's bluid,
But a' things wadna dae ;
They lost baith coo, and soo, and kirn
Upon that first o' May.

NELLIE BRAID.

A dainty bit body was auld Nellie Braid,
A canty bit body was auld Nellie Braid,
Muckle thocht o' and likit wherever she gaed,
A sociable body was auld Nellie Braid.

Aye eident and birrin' a' day at her wheel,
And when gloamin' cam' roun' her dozen she'd reel ;
Though sma' were the winnings wi' spinning she made
Contented and happy was auld Nellie Braid.

Her hoosie sae tidy, sae cosy and clean,
Wi' a' thing in order, and aumrie fu' bien,
Whaur humplocks o' bannocks and farls were laid,
And snell was the kebbuck o' auld Nellie Braid.

A neuk fu' o' tatties fu' mealy and dry,
Wi' a ham on the cleek to frizzle or fry,
And a soo in the crue was the hale stock-in-trade,
Nae ither possession had auld Nellie Braid.

Sae free wi' her bannocks to weans at the schule,
Wi' a daud o' her cheese and a drink o' wheep-yill,
Aye spierin' the questions and psalms that were said,
For a guid-livin' woman was auld Nellie Braid.

But woe to the imp that meddled her spoot,
Or stapt up its mooth wi' a divot or cloot,
Or damm'd up the burn for a paddie or wade—
My certies ! he catch'd it frae auld Nellie Braid.

Though hamely her claithin'—yet what about that ?
She lookit aye doss in her shortgoon and brat ;
And allow me to tell ye, baith matron and maid,
Ye should copy the fashions o' auld Nellie Braid.

CALLENDER'S THRONE

On Kirkton hills there stands a throne,
In rural grandeur Nature's own,
Wi' its canopy o' fir and broom,
And briar and woodbine's sweet perfume ;
Its sloping banks wi' thyme o'erhung,
And speckled gowans twined among,
The bracken and forget-me-not,
The clover's bloom and raven's-foot :
Wi' silver shekels bright and gay,
A' dancing to the God of day,
And vocal every bush and tree
Wi' song of bird and hum of bee.
And what a prospect here, I trow,
Of ten fair counties a' in view—
A bonnier landscape ne'er was seen
Of hill and dale and woodland green.
Far to the left the Calstane slap,
The Leadhills and blue Tinto's tap ;
The Ochils towering to the right,
Wi' Wallace Tower and Snawdoun's height :
Far in the north the Grampians hie,
Ben Lomond bold and Ben Ledi ;
The Cobblers in Argyle are seen,
Wi' hill o' Dum stretched out between.

I've heard it said by folk that's gone
King James the Fifth sat on this throne,
And hurley-hackit doon its brae
Wi' Geordie Binks and Gibbie tae.

A DREAM.

I dreamed I stood on Warlock's Hill,
And drank of fancy there my fill,
And free to roam the fields out o'er
As I was wont in days of yore.

I saw the cot, my home of birth,
The sweetest spot to me on earth,
Wi' its woodbine and its ivied wa',
And the milk-white rose that sweet did blaw.

Its flowery plot before the door
Wi' southernwood and hawthorn hoar,
The scented balm and rosemarie,
And sunflowers spreading wide and hie.

Methought the light of other days
Was shining still upon thy braes,
And friends and kindred, long, long dead,
Were flitting round the old homestead.

The cadence of a parent's word
In loving rapture there I heard ;
The gaberlunzie, too, was there
Wi' heartfelt thanks and fervent prayer.

Nae Eden bower was e'er sae sweet
Though laved wi' Pison's waveless weat ;
But some fell spirit me awoke—
The dream was past, the spell was broke.

SIMMER 'S AWA'.

Alas ! the simmer days are gane,
Nae mair the roses blaw,
The violet by the moss-grey stane
Has hid its heid an' a'.

The gowan's withered on the lea,
The meadow's sere and broon,
And leaves are whirling frae the trees
In eddies a' aroon'.

Noo mute's the blackbird's mellow sang
In wood, or glen, or shaw,
And dumb's the craik the fields amang
When dew's o' evening fa'.

The swallow, too, begins to steer
His course to Afric's shore,
And naething's left our hearts to cheer
But robin at the door.

Some lo'e the springtime o' the year,
Sweet type o' youthful prime,
And some the autumn, faded, sere,
And some the wintertime :

But gie to me the simmer days,
The bonnie month o' June,
When daisies deck the banks and braes,
And birds are a' in tune.

FRANCIS BARNARD.

Born 1834.

FRANCIS BARNARD was born at the hamlet of Devon Square in the parish and county of Clackmannan on 7th May, 1834. Shortly after this event his parents removed to Airdrie, but after a residence of four years there they returned to Clackmannanshire and settled for some time at Forrest Mill. Here the embryo poet was sent to school—the same school in which Michael Bruce, the poet, taught during the last summer of his brief life, and where he wrote his exquisite *Elegy: To Spring*.

At school Francis proved himself an apt pupil, and it became the aim of his parents to educate him for the ministry; but the necessity of removing from place to place in consequence of depressed trade militated sadly against this cherished project, and we find him beginning the business of life as a herd, and ultimately as a miner.

A few years were spent in Bo'ness and Grangemouth, where Mr Barnard married.

Some thirty-four years ago he took up his residence in Woodend, Armadale, where, with the exception of an interval of two years, he has lived since. Shortly after his settlement in Woodend he began contributing verse to the local press and other Scottish newspapers. In 1875 he published these in a collected form under the title of *Sparks from a Miner's Lamp*, and in 1889 he further enhanced his poetical reputation by the publication of

Chirps frae the Engine Lum. These volumes, though they do not include all the inspirations of his muse worthy of preservation, give a fair impression of the poet's abilities. As one of Scotland's collier poets he ranks second only to David Wingate, to whom his first volume is dedicated. Mr Barnard's poems are marked by a delicate perception of the beauties of Nature, as an interpreter of which he is always sensitively realistic: his descriptions of her various moods revealing the keen student and faithful lover.

A perusal of his verse impresses one with the deep sincerity and high moral worth of the man; being, indeed, a reflex of his own character. He is also the possessor of a certain nimbleness of diction and rhythm which lends an additional charm to his themes. He is an ardent lover of the old Scottish "makars," and a few years ago contributed an able appreciation of Dunbar to the Bathgate Burns Club—an essay that showed how truly he was in touch with this "neglected Burns," as he is sometimes called. Of a quiet, unassuming disposition, Mr Barnard is universally respected in the district. The death of his faithful and loving life-partner a few years ago was a heavy blow to the poet; but he still sings sweetly, though the deeper chords have a touch of sadness. Lengthy notices of him have appeared in *Modern Scottish Poets* and in the Poet's Album of the *Weekly News*, edited by Robert Ford.

THE VOICES I' THE GLEN.

When the bud upon the hawthorn bush proclaims the new-born
spring,
An' the merry lark far into heaven ascends on spiral wing,
I wander awa' doon the brae when mony dinna ken,
A' to listen to the music o' the voices i' the glen.

Wee robin noo has fled the doors, an' wha will only gang
 An' listen to him i' the glen, he sings a cheerier sang ;
 An' sweetly on the hawthorn spray the dunnoek pipes his strain :
 Oh ! there 's naething melancholy in the voices i' the glen.

The blackbird his sweet lay o' love chants in mair solemn tune,
 An' the lichter-hearted thrush you'd think the merle's sang wad
 droon ;

An' the merry little shilfa rattles owre an' owre again
 His thowless sang—a's love an' joy that 's heard doon i' the glen.
 O come wi' me a' ye whose high an' holy aim thro' life
 Is battling in your brithers' weal, an' in the weary strife
 Your guid 's requited aye wi' ill—O come awa', an' then
 Ye'll soon forget your sorrows 'mang the voices i' the glen.

Ungratefu' soond was never heard or kent to live doon there ;
 An', oh ! it's aye a blest retreat frae dull an' carkin' care ;
 Should a' the warld look glum an' sour, how sweet it is to ken
 That ye get a kindly greetin' frae the voices i' the glen.
 But yesterday, nae far'er gane, delightfu' 'twas to hear
 A still wee sang up frae the earth stole sweetly on my ear :
 I listened ; 'twas the primrose singing, " Here I come again
 To waken up the beauty that is sleepin' i' the glen.

" The buttercup an' daisy soon in legiou will be here,
 An' the gaudy little heartsease that ne'er fails the heart to cheer,
 An' a thousand ither beauties which to sing I maun refrain,
 A' coming yet to bless you wi' their music i' the glen.
 An' after I am sleepin', when the merle forgets to sing,
 An' the mavis downa dae aught but salute you wi' his wing,
 Ye'll get the bonnie harebell an' the stately foxglove, when
 They will sing a merry welcome as ye come into the glen."

She ceased to sing ; but oh, she smiled all blushing loveliness,
 Like sweet young maiden half-attired, there in the crumpled dress
 She had thrown in haste around her in her eagerness just then
 To hurry forth an' rouse the beauty sleepin' i' the glen.

Mair might I sing, but now the trees an' bushes are a' thrang
 Rejoicin' in their sweet birth-time; but I maun close my sang;
 On the wimplin' little burnie I may something sing again
 An' its music tinkle, tinklin' on its way doon thro' the glen.

A' ye wha wad hae freedom frae the world's deceitfu' snares,
 In busy, bustlin', tainted life yet strive to droon your cares,
 An' think to find your peace o' mind in haunts o' sinfu' men,
 O seek the holy pleasures that are found doon in a glen.

HOONEYMOON SONG.

O care will gar a man look wae,
 An' care will mak' him glad,
 E'en care will heave his heart owre hie,
 An' care will drive him mad:
 But trow me, man is blessed by cares
 The fewer that they be,
 For a' my care is for my Nell,
 An' Nell's a' for me.

Nae warld's gear e'er gae me fear,
 Or care to cross my rest,—
 But what has love to do wi' gear?
 For wi't he's seldom blest:
 I daily toil for Nellie's smile,
 An' the sweet blink o' her e'e,
 An' I've nae care but for my Nell,
 An' Nell nane but me.

Ye wha hae lived in Hymen's band
 Twa-thirds o' a' your life,
 An' watched your little offspring sweet
 Grow up to man an' wife,
 The sweetest time o' a' your lives
 Was (sure ye'll a' agree)
 When ye'd nane to care for but your Nell,
 An' Nell nane but ye.

Gae mix ye wi' the babblin' crowd
 Whase peace is wrecked at hame,
 An' seek your joys in princely ha's,
 Wanrestfu' lord an' dame ;
 In the wide desert I could dwell,
 An' joyfu' there wad be,
 Wi' nought to care for but my Nell,
 An' Nell nought but me.

OUR WEE FRAN'.

Up again, ye waukrife loon,
 Nae time sin' I laid ye doon ;
 Mammie's bairnies whiles sleep soun', —
 Cuddle doon, my bairnie.

Mammie has a heap to dae,
 Something makin' for you tae —
 Na ! ye'll hae your waukrife way,
 Restless, thrawart bairnie.

There's your ba', then, an' your coo,
 Baith frae England sent to you ;
 Whistle tae ! there, wheeple noo,
 Blaw awa', my bairnie.

There's your drum tae, play awa',
 Mam will sing to ye ana'
 While she mak's a frockie braw
 To her bonnie bairnie.

Eh ! there's dey¹ up frae the raw,
 Come to tak' my bairn awa' ;
 Noo ye'll stend, an' jump, an' craw —
 Wait awee, my bairnie.

Wait ! I'll dight your facie clean,
 Syne ye're aff to Auntie Jean,
 An' she'll bring ye back at e'en,
 Gin da comes to bairnie.

¹ Grandfather.

Happy baith to gang awa',
 Life's extremes—the spring an' fa',
 Hand in ither's hand, the twa—
 Dey's fond o' the bairnie.

Aft the mists bedim my e'e,
 When I ask futurity
 What I wish, yet canna see —
 Heaven guide my bairnie.

GONE BEFORE.

IN MEMORY OF MY WIFE.

Yes, gone away from the sinful strife ;
 Not dead, but alive now evermore ;
 In garments of sheen in the higher life,
 Singing the song on the farther shore ;
 And a golden crown she weareth now,
 A harp she bears in her snow-white hand,
 The victor's wreath is around her brow,
 And beside her a little child doth stand.

Beautiful, oh but a wistful eye
 She casteth afar o'er the troubled wave ;
 No sorrow there, but a longing—a sigh
 For one whom beside her she now would have.
 Her sufferings are all in the swelling past,
 Bravely she breasted the surging tide ;
 She fought and she struggled, conquer'd at last,
 And landed safe on the other side.

Bildads and others then came my way,
 Came with false words to comfort me ;
 My mother went home on the self-same day—
 I had surely sinned in a great degree.
 God knoweth best, He alone doth know,
 But daily my cry unto Him is gone
 From mine Ebenezer of long ago—
 Help me as hitherto Thou hast done.

My soul is weary, I too would go !
 Only a year, but a wearisome time
 Of waiting and watching. Ah ! time moves slow
 When the heart is afar in another clime.
 To take me hence some day He will come.
 I'll live in the thought soon His time may be ;
 Oh, happy the meeting when I go home,
 For there she is waiting to welcome me.

SONNET : AN EVENING IN SPRING.

How sweet, how beautiful, how mild and still,
 Now that young Spring has shown her infant face :
 The sun has set behind the western hill,
 And gold-tinged clouds swim through the vaulted space
 Like golden fishes in a crystal vase.
 Pleasant the murmur of the purling rill,
 Mixed with the little songsters of the grove,
 All sweetly carolling their lays of love.
 'Tis twilight, and the thrush now sings alone :
 The smaller birds erewhile have one by one
 Dropt off—his song confused, but sweeter grown,
 The last tones sweetest, till, now hush ! 'tis done.
 O ! I could dwell among the woods with thee
 To listen to thy strains of richest melody !

THE LADDIES NOO-A-DAYS.

Last week our tailyour sent owre-bye
 Three suits, ane for ilk lad,
 Yet our guidwife ne'er said 'twas wrang,
 Or richt, or guid, or bad ;
 But sud the lassock mint a dress
 She drees a week o' waes—
 'Twere better gin the lasses a'
 Were laddies noo-a-days.

The only lass we ever had,
 An', dootless, my tae e'e,
 An' ane wad think the mither wad
 Indulge the lass awee ;
 But na, gin but the lads are richt
 She disna care twa straes :
 Ah ! mithers mak' owre muckle o'
 Their laddies noo-a-days.

Yestreen a neebor's sons had coft
 Their sister a new hat ;
 Our lass but said, " Lang ere our lads
 Wad buy *me* ane like that."
 " Dress, dress ! the pride o' lassies noo !"
 Our guidwife gravely says,
 "'Twill ruin ye !" but ne'er a word
 'Bout laddies noo-a-days.

" Haud there !" quo' I, ye're far eneuch,
 My douce, my dainty dame,
 I 'm doobtfu' gin the lassies be
 Sae sair's ye think to blame ;
 An' gin ye'll listen for awee
 I'll cure ye o' your craze—
 The lassies arena hauf sae bad's
 The laddies noo-a-days.

" They'll barely hae their schulin' dune,
 An' start a job o' wark,
 Whan they come hame they're trickit out
 In dickie or white sark :
 A' cuff'd an' collar'd round the neck,
 They'll traik the glens an' braes,
 Ye'd think they earl's sons were born,
 The laddies noo-a-days.

" It wisna sae when I was young :
 Ye needna lauch or smirk—
 A gravat thro' the week, a scarf
 On Sabbath to the kirk :

Ae suit, that kept out winter's cauld,
 An' simmer's warmer rays,
 Ser'd a' the year ; in pouch nae watch
 Like laddies noo-a-days.

“ An' oh, they're wise ! sae soberly
 They'll tell ye, an' discreet,
 The suit that haps frae winter's cauld
 Is no for simmer's heat,
 An' twa they'll hae, an' ane forbye
 When at their games and plays :
 The deil has got possession o'
 The laddies noo-a-days.

“ To try an' reason wi' the loons
 Is sure a losin' game,
 The laddies are the people noo,
 An' wit will dee wi' them ;
 Their grammar isna Lennie's noo,
 Their coont-book isna Gray's —
 The faithers clearly a' are fools
 To laddies noo-a-days.

“ But hark, guidwife, I'll tell ye what's
 Gat settled in my pow,
 An' a' your skill to drive it oot
 Maun feckless prove, I trow,—
 A' this frac'a' 'bout lassies' pride
 Redounds na to your praise ;
 The wyte lies a' on mithers wi'
 Their laddies noo-a-days.

“ Ye'll mind yon tale I read ye aince,
 Hoo that a chiel began
 An' wrocht, an' focht, an' toiled, an' swat
 Until he made a man ?¹

¹ Mrs Shelley's *Frankenstein*.

Hoo he got frichtit at his wark,
 An' fled frae 't in amaze?—
 Ye've raised the ghaist that fleys ye thro'
 Your laddies noo-a-days.

“Langsyne when Adam i' the yaird
 Gaed wand'rin' a' alane,
 Aye lookin' roond him for a mate,
 An' wondered he had nane,
 The ane he gat his equal was
 In a' thing weel as claes;
 An' is 't no meet the jauds sud match
 Our laddies noo-a-days?

“Ye'll mind yon time when I cam' yont
 To spend an hour at e'en?
 I aye was sure to get ye dicht,
 An' tosh, an' snod, an' clean;
 For prudence tauld ye love an' dirt
 Thegither aye were faes,—
 Nae dirty drab for me—the same
 Wi' laddies noo-a-days.

“An' when on Sabbath i' the kirk
 Ye glanced owre frae your pew,
 Ye smiled sae sweetly in your dress—
 Yon frock o' bonnie blue;
 An' trippin' hame in glossy shoon,
 Wi' buckles 'boon the taes,
 Ye charmed my soul as lassies dae
 The laddies noo-a-days.

“I winna hear the jauds abused,
 (I likit them mysel')
 E'en tho' they be a little vain,
 (Ye're proof o't, wad ye tell)
 An' whiles gang owre the score awae—
 A storm ye needna raise—
 The faut lies a' wi' mithers an'
 Their laddies noo-a-days.

“ ‘ My son ’s my son,’ my mither said,
 ‘ Until he gets a wife ;
 My dochter aye my dochter is
 As lang ’s we ’re baith in life.’
 But noo the gye’s completely turned,—
 I carena wha gainsays—
 The mithers lavish a’ their love
 On laddies noo-a-days.

“ To trip or fair wish they to gang,
 Their wish is ne’er denied,
 Or ball, or concert, aye to them
 The needfu’ is supplied.
 An’ when frae wark on Saturday
 They come hame wi’ their pays,
 The mithers line aye weel the pouch
 O’ laddies noo-a-days.

“ An’ noo I’ve tauld ye what I thocht,
 My dainty, guid auld dame,
 That mithers for their dochters’ pride
 Themsel’s are maist to blame :
 An’ aye the langer, waur ’twill get
 Unless they mend their ways,
 An’ no’ jist mak’ sae muckle o’
 Their laddies noo-a-days.”

THE AULD CRAIG MILL.

Air—“Oor Kailyard.”

To Scotland owre the sea, an’ the auld Craig Mill,
 My heart does aften flee—to the auld Craig Mill,
 Whaur to my heart’s content,
 Ere the world’s cares I kent,
 Youth’s happy days I spent in the auld Craig Mill.

A burnie ran sae clear by the auld Craig Mill,
 That is aye a memory dear wi' the auld Craig Mill,
 An' thro' its glens an' braes
 We would gather nits an' slaes,
 O ! happy, happy days in the auld Craig Mill.

There grew an ashen tree in the auld Craig Mill,
 An' a mavis blythe an' free, at the auld Craig Mill,
 Wad on the tapmost bough
 (O I think I hear him noo)
 Sing a' the simmer thro' at the auld Craig Mill.

O how the inmates strove, o' the auld Craig Mill,
 Wha wad best ilk ither love in the auld Craig Mill,
 But the auld folk noo are gane,
 To their hame abune they 're ta'en,
 An' we 're far awa', alane, frae the auld Craig Mill.

Yet tho' we 're here but twa frae the auld Craig Mill,
 In a foreign land awa' frae the auld Craig Mill,
 We naither chide nor blame,
 For oor hearts are aye the same
 As when we were at hame in the auld Craig Mill.

But they tell me it 's nae mair noo, the auld Craig Mill,
 A' roofless noo an' bare is the auld Craig Mill,
 For Time wha ruth has nane,
 An' will naething let alane,
 Is tumblin' stane an' stane o' the auld Craig Mill.

Though here we ne'er shall see at the auld Craig Mill,
 A' them wha met wi' glee at the auld Craig Mill,
 Yet we 'll meet again, I trow,
 In a hoose that 's ever new,
 Time never doon can pu' like the auld Craig Mill.

JAMES BRUNTON STEPHENS.

Born 1835.

JAMES BRUNTON STEPHENS, of whom it has been said that he "enjoys the highest reputation of any poet living in Australia,"¹ was born at Bo'ness in 1835. Having received the customary education of the schools in his native town he proceeded to Edinburgh University where he was successful in obtaining Honours. On completing his studies he became tutor to the son of a wealthy gentleman, and travelled for three years with his pupil through France, Italy, Turkey, Egypt and Palestine. Thereafter he was appointed assistant master in one of the Greenock academies where he taught for six years. In 1866 he emigrated to Queensland where he engaged in private tuition for some time, and eventually entered the service of the Education Department as head-master of Ashgrove School.

His contributions to the *Australasian* and the *Queenslander* soon brought him into fame, and as a recognition of his genius he was transferred to the Colonial Secretary's Office at Brisbane—a position which he still retains.

The poetry of Stephens is distinctly Australian in theme and treatment: indeed it is hard to imagine from a perusal of his poems that he is a native of Scotland, so characteristically colonial has he become. In 1873 he published

¹ *Australian Ballads*, edited by Douglas B. W. Sladen, B.A., Oxon.; B.A., LL.B., Melbourne.

The Black Gin and other Poems. This was followed by *The Godolphin Arabian*, and in 1885 he issued *Convict Once and other Poems*—all of which have gained him the golden opinions of the critics at home and in Australia. With probably the exception of the luckless-starred Gordon there is no poet in Australia more quoted, or who lends himself so appropriately to adaptability. His humour is brimful of quaint allusions and exquisitely turned phrases which lay hold of the reader and compel him to leave the beaten track of poesy and revel with the poet in his “warlock-brief” of extravagant light-heartedness. “Subtle shades of new delight,” to quote the poet’s own words, are continually laughing out from his cunningly contrived yet ever facetious phraseology and subtlety of metre. Among the humorous poets of Australia Stephens is *facile princeps*; but, like Hood, he can be serious on occasion, and in this vein he is equally successful. *Convict Once*—“the exquisitely-finished, highly-cultured, rich, passionate, poetic *Convict Once*”—is a poem full of strong dramatic incident and fine feeling, and probably shows the poet at his best; while in *The Midnight Axe*, published a few years ago in the *Queenslander*, the weird, the pathetic, and the dramatic are skilfully blended in what must needs be regarded as a great and powerful poem.

James Brunton Stephens is certainly not the least brilliant of Linlithgowshire’s many famous sons.

MY OTHER CHINEE COOK.

Yes, I got another Johnny; but he was to Number One
As a Satyr to Hyperion, as a rushlight to the sun;
He was lazy, he was cheeky, he was dirty, he was sly,
But he had a single virtue, and its name was “rabbit-pie.”

Now those who say the bush is dull are not so far astray,
For the neutral tints of station life are anything but gay ;
But, with all its uneventfulness, I solemnly deny
That the bush is unendurable along with rabbit-pie.

We had fixed one day to sack him, and agreed to moot the point
When my lad should bring our usual regale of cindered joint,
But instead of cindered joint we saw and smelt, my wife and I,
Such a lovely, such a beautiful, oh ! such a rabbit-pie !

There was quite a new expression on his lemon-coloured face
And the unexpected odour won him temporary grace,
For we tacitly postponed the sacking point till by-and-bye,
And we tacitly said nothing save the one word, " rabbit-pie."

I had learned that pleasant mystery should simply be endured,
And forebore to ask of Johnny where the rabbits were procured !
I had learned from Number One to stand aloof from how and why,
And I threw myself upon the simple fact of rabbit-pie.

And when the pie was opened, what a picture did we see !
" They lay in beauty side by side, they filled our home with glee !"
How excellent, how succulent, back, neck, and leg and thigh ;
What a noble gift is manhood ! what a trust is rabbit-pie !

For a week the thing continued, rabbit-pie from day to day ;
Though where he got the rabbits John would ne'er vouchsafe to say ;
But we never seemed to tire of them, and daily could descry
Subtle shades of new delight in each successive rabbit-pie.

Sunday came ; by rabbit reckoning, the seventh day of the week ;
We had dined ; we sat in silence, both our hearts (?) too full to speak ;
When in walks Cousin George, and, with a sniff, says he, " Oh my !
What a savoury suggestion ! what a smell of rabbit-pie !"

" Oh, why so late, George ?" says my wife, the rabbit-pie is gone ;
But you *must* have one for tea, though. Ring the bell, my dear,
for John."

So I rang the bell for John, to whom my wife did signify,
" Let us have an early tea, John, and another rabbit-pie."

But John seemed taken quite aback, and shook his funny head,
 And uttered words I comprehended no more than the lead ;
 " Go, do as you are bid," I cried, " we wait for no reply ;
 Go ! let us have tea early, and another rabbit-pie ! "

Oh, that I had stopped his answer ! But it came out with a run :
 " Last-a week-a plenty puppy ; this-a week-a puppy done ! "
 Just then my wife, my love, my life, the apple of mine eye,
 Was seized with what seemed " mal-de-mer,"—" sick transit " rabbit-pie !

And George ! By George, he laughed, and then he howled like
 any bear !
 The while my wife contorted like a mad convulsionnaire ;
 And I—I rushed on Johnny, and I smote him hip and thigh,
 And I never saw him more, nor tasted more of rabbit-pie.

And the childless mothers met me, as I kicked him from the door,
 With loud maternal wailings, and anathemas galore ;
 I must part with pretty Tiny, I must part with little Fly,
 For I'm sure they know the story of the so-called " rabbit-pie."

THE SOUTHERN CROSS :

A NOCTURNE, WITH MOSQUITO ACCOMPANIMENT.

Four stars on night's brow, or night's bosom --
 Whichever the reader prefers,
 Or night without either may do some—
 Each one to his taste or to hers.
 Four stars ! to continue inditing,
 So long as I feel in the vein—
 Hullo ! what the deuce is that biting ?
 Mosquitos again !

Oh, glories not gilded but golden,
 Oh, daughters of night unexcelled,
 By the sons of the North unbeholden,
 By our sons (if we have them) beheld !

Oh, jewels the midnight enriching,
 Oh, four which are double of twain,
 Oh, mystical — Bother the itching !
 Mosquitos again !

You alone I can anchor my eye on,
 Of you and you only I'd write ;
 And I now look awry on Orion,
 That once was my chiefest delight.
 Ye exalt me high over the petty
 Conditions of pleasure and pain—
 Oh, Heaven ! here are these maladetti !
 Mosquitos again !

The poet should ever be placid,
 Oh, vex not his soul or his skin !
 Shall I stink them with carbolic acid ?
 It is done, and afresh I begin.
 Lucid orbs !—That last sting very sore is—
 I am fain to leave off—I am fain ;
 It has given me uncommon *dolores*—
 The Latin for pain.

Not quite what the shape of a cross is,
 A little lop-sided, I own—
 Confound your infernal proboscis,
 Inserted well-nigh to the bone !
 Queen-lights of the heights of high heaven,
 Ensconced in the crystal inane—
 Oh me, here are seventy times seven
 Mosquitos again !

Oh, horns of a mighty trapezium,
 Quadrilateral area, hail !
 Oh, bright is the light of magnesium—
 Oh, hang them all male and female !
 At the end of an hour of their stinging
 What shall rest of me then—what remain ?
 I shall die as the swan dieth, singing
 Mosquitos again !

Shock keen as the shock of the levin !
They sting, and I change in a flash
From the peace and the poppies of heaven
To the flame and the firewood of—dash !
Oh, Cross of the South ! I forgot you ;
These demons have addled my brain ;
Once more I look upward—Od rot you,
You're at it again !

There ! stick in your pitiless brad-awl,
And do your malevolent worst—
Dine on me, and when you have had all,
Let others go in for a “burst.”
Oh, silent and pure constellation !
Can you pardon my fretful refrain ?
Forgive, oh ! forgive my vexation—
They're at it again.

Oh, imps that provoke to mad laughter,
Wing'd fiends that are fed from my brow,
Bite hard ! let your neighbours come after,
And sting where you stung me just now.
Red brands on it smitten and bitten,
Round blotches I rub at in vain—
Oh, Crux ! whatsoever I've written
I've written in pain.

Ye chrysolite crystalline creatures,
Wan watchers, the fairest afield !
Stars—and garters ! are these my own features
In the merciless mirror revealed ?
They are mine, even mine, and none other,
And my hands, how they slacken and strain !
Oh, my sister, my spouse, and my mother !
I'm going insane !

TO A BLACK GIN.

Daughter of Eve, draw near—I would behold thee.
 Good Heavens ! Could ever arm of man enfold thee ?
 Did the same Nature that made Phryne mould thee ?

Come thou to leeward ; for thy balmy presence
 Savoureth not a whit of *mille-fleur* :—
 My nose is no insentient excrescence.

Thou art not beautiful, I tell thee plainly,
 Oh ! thou ungainliest of things ungainly ;
 Who thinks thee less than hideous doats insanely.

Most unæsthetical of things terrestrial,
 Hadst thou indeed an origin celestial ?
 Thy lineaments are positively bestial !

Yet thou my sister art, the clergy tell me ;
 Though, truth to state, thy brutish looks compel me
 To hope these parsons merely want to sell me.

A hundred times and more I've heard and read it ;
 But if Saint Paul himself came down and said it,
 Upon my soul I would not give it credit.

"God's image cut in ebony," says some one ;
 'Tis to be hoped some day thou may'st become one :
 Thy present image is a very rum one.

Thy "face the human face divine ?" . . . O, Moses !
 Whatever trait divine thy face discloses
 Some vile Olympian cross-play pre-supposes.

Thy nose appeareth but a transverse section ;
 Thy mouth hath no particular direction,—
 A flabby-rimmed abyss of imperfection.

Thy skull development mine eye displeases ;
 Thou wilt not suffer much from brain diseases :
 Thy facial angle forty-five degrees is.

The coarseness of thy tresses is distressing,
 With grease and raddle firmly coalescing ;
 I cannot laud thy system of " top-dressing."

Thy dress is somewhat scant for proper feeling ;
 As is thy flesh too,—scarce thy bones concealing ;
 Thy calves unquestionably want *revealing*.

Thy rugged skin is hideous with tattooing,
 And legible with hieroglyphic wooing—
 Sweet things in art of some fierce lover's doing.

For thou some lover hast, I bet a guinea,—
 Some partner in thy fetid ignominy,
 The *raison d'être* of this piccaninny.

What must *he* be whose eye thou hast delighted ?
 His sense of beauty hopelessly benighted !
 The canons of his taste how badly sighted !

What must his gauge be, if thy features pleased him ?
 If lordship of such limbs as thine appeased him,
 It was not "*calf* love" certainly that seized him.

And is he amorously sympathetic ?
 And doth he kiss thee ? . . . Oh my soul prophetic !
 The very notion is a strong emetic !

And doth he smooth thine hours with oily talking ?
 And take thee conjugally out a-walking ?
 And crown thy transports with a tomahawking ?

I guess his love and anger are combined so ;
 His passions on thy shoulders are defined so ;
 " His passages of love " are underlined so.

Tell me thy name. What ? Helen ? (Oh Enone
 That name bequeathed to one so foul and bony,
 Avengeth well thy ruptured matrimony !)

Eve's daughter ! with that skull and that complexion ?
 What principle of " natural selection "
 Gave thee with Eve the most remote connection ?

Sister of L. E. L——, of Mrs Stowe, too !
 Of E. B. Browning ! Harriet Martineau, too.
 Do theologians know where fibbers go to ?

Of dear George Elliot, whom I worship daily !
 Of Charlotte Brontë ! and Joanna Baillie !—
 Methinks that theory is rather “scaly.”

Thy primal parents came a period later—
 The handiwork of some vile imitator ;
 I fear they had the devil's *imprimatur*.

This in the retrospect.—Now, what's before thee ?
 The white man's heaven, I fear, would simply bore thee ;
 Ten minutes of doxology would floor thee.

Thy Paradise should be some land of Goshen,
 Where appetite should be thy sole devotion,
 And surfeit be the climax of emotion ;—

A land of Bunya-bunyas towering splendid,—
 Of honey-bags on every tree suspended,—
 A Paradise of sleep and riot blended ;—

Of tons of 'baccy, and tons more to follow,—
 Of wallaby as much as thou couldst swallow,—
 Of hollow trees, with 'possums in the hollow ;—

There, undismayed by frost or flood, or thunder,
 As joyous as the skies thou roamest under,
 There shouldst thou . . . Cooeey . . . Stop ! she's off . . . No wonder.

DROUGHT AND DOCTRINE.

Come, take the tenner, doctor. . . . Yes, I know the bill says
 “five,”

But it ain't as if you'd merely kep' the little un alive ;
 Man, you saved the mother's reason when you saved that baby's
 life,
 An' it's thanks to you I hav'n't a ravin' idiot for a wife.

Let me tell you all the story, an' if then you think it strange
 That I'd like to fee you extry—why, I'll take the bloomin' change.
 If yer bill had said a hundred. . . . I'm a poor man, doc., an' yet
 I'd 'a slaved till I had squared it; ay, still been in yer debt.
 Well, you see, the wife's got notions on a heap o' things that ain't
 To be handled by a man as don't pretend to be a saint;
 So I minds "the cultivation," smokes my pipe, an' makes no stir,
 An' religion, an' such p'int, I lays entirely on to her.
 Now she got it fixed within her that if children die afore
 They've been sprinkled by the parson, they've no show for ever-
 more;
 An' though they're spared the pitchforks, an' the brimstun an' the
 smoke,
 They ain't allowed to mix up there with other little folk.
 So, when our last began to pine, an' lost his pretty smile,
 An' not a parson to be had within a hunder mile—
 (For though there is a chapel down at Bluegrass Creek, you know,
 The clergy's there on dooty only thrice a year or so)—
 Well, when our yet unchristened mite grew limp an' thin an' pale,
 It would 'a cut you to the heart to hear the mother wail
 About her "unregenerate babe," an' how, if it should go,
 'Twould have no chance with them as had their registers to show.
 Then awful quiet she grew an' hadn't spoken for a week,
 When in came brother Bill one day with news from Bluegrass
 Creek.
 "I seen," says he, "a notice on the chapel railin' tied,
 They'll have service there this evenin'—can the youngster stand
 the ride?
 For we can't have parson here, if it be true as I've heard say
 There 's a dyin' man as wants him more 'n twenty mile away;
 So—" he hadn't time to finish ere the child was out of bed
 With a shawl about its body, an' a hood about its head.
 "Saddle up," the missus said. I did her biddin' like a bird,
 Perhaps I thought it foolish, but I never said a word;
 For though I have a vote in what kids eat, drink, or wear,
 Their spiritual requirements are entirely her affair.
 We started on our two hours' ride beneath a burning sun,
 With Aunt Sal an' Bill for sureties to renounce the Evil One;

An' a bottle in Sal's basket that was labelled "Fine Old Tom"
 Held the water that regeneration was to follow from.
 For Bluegrass Creek was dry, as Bill that very day had found,
 An' not a sup o' water to be had for miles around ;
 So, to make salvation sartin for the babby's little soul
 We had filled a dead marine, sir, at the family water-hole.
 Which every forty rods or so Sal raised it to her head,
 An' took a snifter, "Just enough to wet her lips," she said :
 Whereby it came to pass that when we reached the chapel door
 There was only what would serve the job, an' deuce a dribble more.
 The service had begun—we didn't like to carry in
 A vessel with so evident a carritur for gin,
 So we left it in the porch, an', havin' done our level best,
 Went an' owned to bein' "miserable offenders" with the rest.
 An' nigh upon the finish, when the parson had been told
 That a lamb was waitin' there to be admitted to the fold,
 Rememberin' the needful, I gets up and quietly slips
 To the porch to see a swagsman—with our bottle to his lips.
 Such a faintness came all over me, you might have then an' there
 Knocked me down, sir, with a feather, or tied me with a hair.
 Doc., I couldn't speak or move ; and though I caught the beggar's
 eye,
 With a wink he turned the bottle bottom up an' drank it dry.
 An' then he flung it from him, bein' suddenly aware
 That the label on 't was merely a deloosion an' a snare ;
 An' the crash cut short the people in the middle of A-men,
 An' all the congregation heard him holler, "Sold again !"
 So that christ'nin' was a failure ; every water flask was drained,
 Even the monkey in the vestry not a blessed drop contained ;
 An' the parson in a hurry cantered off upon his mare,
 Leavin' baby unregenerate an' missus in despair.
 That night the child grew worse, but my care was for the wife,
 I feared more for her reason than for that wee spark o' life

But you know the rest—how Providence contrived that very night
 That a doctor should come cadgin' at our shanty for a light.

Baby? Oh! he's chirpy, thank ye—been baptized—his name is
Bill,

It's weeks an' weeks since parson came an' put him thro' the mill;
An' his mother's mighty vain upon the subject of his weight,
An' a reg'lar cock-a-hoop about his spiritual state.

So now you'll take the tenner; oh, confound the bloomin' change!
Lord, had Billy died!—but, doctor, don't you think it summut
strange

That them as keeps the gate should have refused to let him in
Because a fool mistook a drop of Adam's ale for gin?

SPIRIT AND STAR.

Thro' the bleak cold voids, thro' the wilds of space,
Trackless and starless, forgotten of grace;
Thro' the dusk that is neither day nor night,
Thro' the grey that is neither dark nor light;
Thro' thin chill ethers where dieth speech,
Where the pulse of the music of heaven cannot reach,
Unwarmed by the breath of living thing,
And forever unswept of angel's wing;
Thro' the cold, thro' the void, thro' the wilds of space,
With never a home or a resting-place—
How far must I wander? Oh, God! how far?
I have lost my star! I have lost my star!

Once on a time unto me was given
The fairest star in the starry heaven—
A little star to tend and to guide,
To nourish and cherish and love as a bride.
Far from all great bright orbs alone,
Even to few of the angels known,
It moved; but a sweet pale light on its face
From the sapphire foot of the Throne of Grace
That was better than glory and more than might
Made it a wonder of quiet delight.
Still must I wander? Oh, God! how far?
I have lost my star! I have lost my star!

On the starry brow was the peace of the blest,
And bounteous peace on the starry breast :
All beautiful things were blossoming there,
Sighing their loves to the delicate air.
No creature of God such fragrance breathed,
White rose-girdled and white rose-enwreathed,
And its motion was music—an undertone
With a strange sad sweetness all its own,
Dearer to me than the louder hymn
Of the God-enraptured seraphim. —
How far must I wander ? Ah, Heaven ! how far ?
I have lost my star ! I have lost my star !

In a round of joy, remote and alone,
Yet ever in sight of the Great White Throne,
Together we moved—for a love divine
Had blent the life of the star with mine ;
And had all the angels of all the spheres
Forecast my fate and foretold my tears,
The weary wandering, the gruesome gloom,
And bruited them forth thro' the trump of doom —
Hiding a smile in my soul, I had moved
Only the nearer to what I loved.
Yet I must wander—Oh, God ! how far ?
I have lost my star ! I have lost my star !

Ah ! woe the delusive demon-light
That beckon'd me, beckon'd me, day and night !
The untwining of heart-strings, the backward glance,
The truce with faith and the severance.
Ah ! woe the unfolding of wayward wings
That bore me away from all joyous things
To realms of space, whence the pale, sweet gleam
Looked dim as a dimly-remembered dream :
To farther realms, where the faint light spent
Vanished at length from my firmament !
And I seek it in vain—ah, God ! how far ?
I have lost my star ! I have lost my star !

On sleepless wing I have followed it
Through the star-sown fields of the Infinite,
And where foot of angel hath never trod
I have threaded the golden mazes of God.
I have pierced where the fire-fount of being runs,
I have dashed myself madly on burning suns,
Then downward have swept, with shuddering breath,
Thro' the place of the shadows and shapes of death,
Till sick with sorrow, and spent with pain,
I float and faint in the dim inane !
Must I yet wander ? Oh, God ! how far ?
I have lost my star ! I have lost my star !

Oh, could I find in uttermost space
A place for hope, and for prayer a place,
Mine were no suit for a glittering prize
In the chosen seats of the upper skies—
No grand ministration on thronèd height
In the midmost intense of unspeakable light :
What sun-god sphere, with all-dazzling beam,
Could be unto me as that sweet, sad gleam ?
Let me roam through the ages all alone
If He give me not back my own, my own !
How far must I wander ? Oh, God ! how far ?
I have lost my star ! I have lost my star !

In the whispers that tremble from sphere to sphere,
Which the ear of a spirit alone can hear,
I have heard it breathed that there cometh a day
When tears from all eyes shall be wiped away ;
When faintness of heart and drooping of wings
Shall be told as a tale of olden things ;
When toil and trouble, and all distress
Shall be lost in the round of blessedness :
In that day, when division of loves shall cease,
And all things draw near to the centre of peace,
In the fulness of time, in the ages afar,
God ! oh God ! shall I find my star ?

ANDREW MORRIS.

Born 1842.

ANDREW MORRIS, who is better known to the readers of the *West Lothian Courier* by his *nom-de-plume* of "Amos," was born in 1842 at Shotts—a parish of which it has been said that it is "famous for guid leeks, late hairsts, and keen curlers." His parents were of that respectable, intelligent working class that looks with more pride on an honest name than on any worldly distinction. Encouraged by our subject's early predilection for literary work they strove to procure for him a good education to fit him for a higher walk of life; but a train of misfortunes prevented them from having their hopes in this respect fully realised. With the exception of a few years spent in Armadale Mr Morris has all his life resided just over the borders of the county; but as his effusions have always appeared in the *Courier* and his connections with the county otherwise are of an indissoluble nature we consider his inclusion among her bards amply justified. While in Armadale Mr Morris won the friendship of Mr F. Barnard—a connection which is still firmly preserved in the hearts of both, and occasionally refreshed with mutual rhyming epistles. For many years Mr Morris has carried on business as a draper and grocer in Harthill where he is universally respected for his probity and intelligence. He is possessed of a large fund of sly, pawky humour which renders his share of a debate or a social meeting eminently successful.

His poetry is permeated by homely touches of fine feeling and kindly observations of human nature, while his humour is of that quaint, canny sort that is not so much mirth as a suggestion of laughter.

The subject of the fine poem, *The Miner's Address to his Fiddle*, was the author's father, who, as he laid his fiddle aside shortly before his death, remarked, "I ha'e noo played my last tune."

A brief notice of Mr Morris appears in the twelfth series of Edwards' *Modern Scottish Poets*.

THE MINER'S ADDRESS TO HIS FIDDLE.

I hear the sough of death's dark stream,
 And now stand waiting on the pier
 From which all mortals must embark
 From this earth to another sphere :
 My pains to-day are less severe,
 Still weary feels my fainting heart,
 So with my friend, my fiddle dear,
 Some tunes I'll play before we part :
 Then let my feeble fingers press
 Thy trembling strings to some sweet lay :
 Full oft thou mad'st my sorrows less
 When tempest-tossed on life's highway.

Companion close, at merry dance
 On thee I played such stirring airs,
 That hoary-headed men would spring
 With nimble steps from off their chairs :
 Young maids and men in loving pairs
 Swept round the hall in cheerful glee ;
 For hours thou poured'st within their ears
 One constant stream of melody.

Come then, my fiddle, let me feel
Thee closer, closer to my heart :
On thee I'll play one merry reel,
My bosom friend, before we part.

When tyrants hard me sore oppressed,
(And miners' tyrants are not few—
Those who have suffered at their hands
Can only tell what they will do.)
As flowers are oft revived by dew,
Or weary eyes refreshed by sleep,
So did a tune on thee renew
My strength when worn by tyrants deep.
No cursing tyrant's bitter scoff,
Or labour robbed by them from me,
Or haughty look, deprived me of
The pleasure that I found in thee.

When death's unfeeling hand removed
My coy young bud of promise fair,
In dust upon my kitchen wall
Thou hung'st untouched for many a year ;
And when I dropped a silent tear,
Again replaced thy broken strings,
Thy tones seemed mournful to my ear,
Thou seem'st to share my sufferings :
In soft seraphic measures roll
Thy music sweet to me once more,
Such as may cheer a weeping soul
When death's last weary struggle's o'er.

In grief I've held the parting hands
Of friends ere they would cross the sea,
In grief I've had a last long look
Of friends ere they would buried be ;
But greater grief it is to me,—
Blest source of joy thro' life's sad vale,—
To part, dear fiddle, now with thee—
Now let me lay thee on thy nail.

ZACKAREE.

There was a man called Zackaree
Who taught in an academie
The Glasgow youth with such success
That all admired his cleverness.

Oh, this strange man called Zackaree
Could not one evening take his tea—
He scratched a match, the gas he lit,
He tried to read, but could not sit ;
He tried to smoke, he tried to think,
He tried to sleep, but not a wink
Of either sleep or rest could get—
His fevered brow was wet with sweat.

Oh, this droll man called Zackaree
Had caught a fearful malady ;
What mattered him he could not tell,
But one thing sure he was not well.
He walked around his furnished room,
His brow quite shaded o'er with gloom :
He looked a moment at his books
With heavy eyes and mournful looks :
Nothing he saw could ease his pain,
At last he seized his hat and cane,
And, marching o'er the lobby floor,
Went madly through the open door.

At once he reached the open street :
Upon his face the wintry sleet
Beat hard, and then the gusty wind
Would raise his cloak with hood behind.
He walked along in nervous mood,
And in the Central Station stood ;
Shook from his cloak the snowy spots,
And took the train at once for Shotts.

The doors were slammed, the whistle shrieked,
The carriage jerked, the windows creaked :
Out flew the train with lightning speed—
The poles were scarcely seen indeed—
It went along at such a rate
That Zackie had not long to wait
Before he reached the station, Shotts,
A place once famed for iron pots.

Out from the train at once he goes, .
And passed in haste the flat-roofed rows :
The road that now before him lay
Was dark, which made him far from gay.
The moor around was black and wide,
Still on he marched with rapid stride
Till, through this mossy wilderness
To make his weary journey less,
He struck round by a hedge of thorn,
And got lost 'mong some greenish corn.

This stately man called Zackaree
Looked round about most mournfullie ;
He raised his eyes and from afar
A light shone like an evening star :
A grateful prayer escaped his lips
As near Mosshead he turned his steps ;
Straight to the door he did advance,
And was invited in at once.
The maid then handed him a chair,
Most kindly asked for his welfare,
Poked up the fire and made it bright,
And said, "'Tis very dark to-night ;"
Then on a cushion down she sat,
Looked in his face—and stroked the cat.

He took the maid upon his knee,
And told to her his salarie,
And said, though good, 'twould yet be more-
Ere very many months were o'er ;

And, taking both her hands in his,
 He thus addressed his lovely miss :—
 “Thou gentle lamb, thou gem of heaven,
 For thy dear heart for years I’ve striven :
 No seraph ever wore a wing,
 That lifted harp, or touched a string,
 On earth below, or heaven above,
 Could be compared with thee, my dove.
 My dearest dear, my heart’s delight,
 Thou thing of sweetness, joy, and light,
 Thy presence fills my mind with joy—
 Thou treasure pure without alloy.
 Should sorrow’s shadow o’er thee creep,
 Or briny tears bedim thy cheek,
 By me shall all thy griefs be quelled,
 As mist is by the sun dispelled.”

The dark maid raised her eyes and smiled,
 Around his neck her arms she coiled,
 And said, “Dear Zack, I’ll marry you
 When once you get a better screw.”

His feelings he could scarcely hide
 When back he went to Kelvinside.
 Sad news soon reached his ears, alas !
 A son of Esculapius
 From Airdrie came along at e’en
 With smart cockade and neat machine,
 Stole Zackie’s flower and darling pet,
 And left poor Zackie mourning yet.

ADDRESS TO MY BED.

While bards like Barnard search for themes
 ’Mong hooses, glens, and running streams,
 And daily gather fame’s bright beams
 Around their head,
 My muse a humbler subject claims—
 It is my bed.

Thou place where life's first morning breaks
 'Midst fears, and hopes, and smothered shrieks !
 Here little man in mighty squeaks
 Begins life's race,
 And ever after nightly seeks
 On thee a place.

Thou Lethean bower by Morpheus blest,
 I sing thy praise, dear place of rest,
 From all the ills that life infest
 And make man weep,
 In thee no trouble can molest
 When sound asleep.

On Forrestburn's beloved bank
 On bed of flowers I've often sank,
 And from this shrine of Nature drank
 My heart's dear fill ;
 But, for pure joy, my bed I'll rank
 Far higher still.

Thou soft domestic harbour, where
 Man casts anchor to repair
 His toil-worn bark—the daily wear
 Of arm and brain,
 And from sleep's gentle influence there
 Gets strength again.

When racking pains our limbs invade,
 Or fever's burning hand is laid
 On our poor, weary, helpless head,
 To thee we go,
 And seek within the blankets' shade
 Help for our woe.

When sable night bids labour cease,
 And silence wraps our homes in peace,
 Then wearied limbs in thankfulness
 Seek thee, blest spot,
 And in thee find for weariness
 An antidote.

When roarin' win's are raisin' waps
 Wi' rattlin' slates and chimney taps,
 And soughin' trees and thunder claps
 Threaten me harm,
 Then safe in thee, the blanket haps
 Me snug and warm.

On thy soft snowy sheets in joy
 All night in glorious peace I lie,
 Without a sorrow, grief or sigh,
 Till eight be struck ;
 Then in my ear a voice will cry,
 "Time ye were up."

When hearts feel sair through want o' cash,
 Or Cupid's darts oor bosoms smash,
 Or neighbours' spite, or silly clash
 Pits us aboot,
 A nicht's soon' sleep on thee will wash
 The warst o't oot.

Thou place of dreams, here mortals soar
 Through realms of bliss unknown before,
 Till joy's delicious cup runs o'er
 Within his hand,
 Until some stupid, senseless snore
 Breaks fancy's wand.

Thou place of dreams, here fancy sails
 On horror's wings through stormy gales,
 And there sees sights and hears such tales
 That dreadful seem,
 Till breaking morn in joy reveals
 'Twas but a dream.

With faltering step the bed is sought
 When mortals feel their labours wrought,
 And life and all the past seems nought
 But worthless strife ;
 'Tis then in thee the struggle's fought
 That closes life.

Stretched out on thee, when life has fled,
 In hallowed, curtained gloom, the dead
 Here rest till borne to that last bed
 By mourning friends,
 And there the grassy blanket's spread,
 And then all ends.

SONG.

By the clear Forrestburn I will wander once more ;
 The skylark is heard and the young flowers are seen :
 There are spots that I love, but this place I adore,
 The trees bud sae bonnie, thy banks look sae green.

Ower roond mossy stanes, 'neath the beech and the rowan,
 Thou glidest away 'midst the sweetest perfume
 That springs frae the wild thyme, the primrose and gowan,
 The sweet scented brier and the braw yellow broom.

The bonnie hare-bells hang their heads in profusion,
 And steep their blue lips in thy clear crystal breast ;
 Here aft, aft at nicht on a green grassy cushion
 The sweet sounds of nature invite me to rest.

When the green robe of spring is laid on thy bosom,
 And blackbird and mavis sing happy and free
 Frae the dark Scottish fir or thorn's dewy blossom,
 A walk by thy banks brings pure pleasure to me.

Here the bird seeks a hame to rear her young broodie ;
 The wild flowers a shade find in cold stormy days :
 My soul swells with joy as I gaze on thy beauty
 When evening's grey shadows creep over thy braes.

Though birds cease to sing, and the autumn leaves wither,
 And thy voice by the storm is changed to a war,
 And snaw fills thy glen, yet at nicht I'll come hither
 And view Forrestburn till my heart beats no more.

ALEXANDER WARDROP.

Born 1850.

ALEXANDER WARDROP was born in the village of Whitburn on 8th March, 1850—the same being Cauther Fair morning, and it was quite in the fitness of events that he should make *Mid Cauther Fair* his most ambitious poetical effort. One who knew him in his boyhood remarked recently, “He was a steerin’ laddie in thae days; whiles wild as a March hare, but a kindlier callan to his playmates wasna to be f’und in a’ the toon.”

He received his education at Whitedalehead School where the late Mr Robert Leggat was then master, and the poet has often dwelt with affection on the attributes of his old dominie whom he regarded as one of the ablest teachers in the Lothians. On leaving school at the early age of nine, he was apprenticed to the tailoring trade, and in the quiet, uneventful round of village life attained to manhood. In his twentieth year he was united to “Annie”—the theme of some of his sweetest songs—and three months later the newly wedded pair took up their residence in “the Pittsburg of Scotland”—Coatbridge—where

“A new household found its place
Among the myriad homes of earth.”

With the exception of seven years spent at West Calder, where the poet acted in the capacity of cutter to the firm of Mungle and Sons, and also went into business on his own account—with this exception the rest of their married

life has been passed in the rising and prosperous town of Coatbridge. There Mr Wardrop for a number of years held the situation of cutter to the local Co-operative Society with credit alike to himself and to the members; but of late years he has been in business for himself as a tailor and clothier. Prior to this he had tried the United States, but not finding the prospect of labour there inviting he returned to Scotland. The experience thus gained, however, was not altogether lost, for in two of his prose sketches—"Oor Bob's New Doctrine" and "Jenny Greer's Adventures"—he has introduced transatlantic scenes with considerable effect. Mr Wardrop is one who has had to face the battle of life in all its stern reality; but he has faced it with success, a fact which he ascribes in great measure to his wife, whose qualities of head and heart have ever been a comfort and stimulating cheer to him.

A writer of verse since boyhood it was not till 1871 that he began sending his lucubrations to the *Weekly Mail* and thereafter to the *Airdrie Advertiser*. For the latter he wrote the most of his prose sketches, and a demand having arisen for their preservation in a permanent form they were published in 1881 with the title of *Johnnie Mathison's Courtship and Marriage, with Songs and Poems*. The volume was cordially received by the press and established the author's reputation as a pithy exponent of the Scottish Doric—"the sweetest, richest, subtlest, most musical of all the living dialects of Europe."¹ This was followed in 1887 by *Mid Cautlier Fair: Poems, Songs and Sketches*—a volume which shows the versatility of Mr Wardrop's

¹ Letter from John Ruskin to an Edinburgh University student—Whit Tuesday, 1887.

genius. In dramatic, didactic and lyric poetry he is equally successful, while his prose sketches, of which there are sixteen, are pawky, witty or boisterously humorous as the author is in the vein. "Michael O'Gorman on Home Rule" is probably the best of these, and never fails to carry an audience.

In recent years Mr Wardrop has contributed to the *Coatbridge Express* a series of racy articles on passing subjects of interest under the pseudonym of "Robin Tamson," some of which—notably Drummond's Evolution Theory, Gladstone and Home Rule, and The Great Co-operative System—are in his most exuberant humour. The sonnet on *Beaconsfield—1879* appeared in the *Edinburgh Courant*, from whence it went the round of the press at home and in the colonies. The illustrious statesman gracefully acknowledged the compliment by sending a letter of thanks to the author, who holds it as one of his greatest treasures. As a rule the poet's muse does not wander

"far frae hame,
Or scour a' airths to hound for fame,"

but finds its sweetest inspiration in the felicities of the home circle. His verse is very musical, and in "the warm lay of love and the light note of gladness" he is singularly happy in the choice of his phrases. A notice of Mr Wardrop appears in an early volume of *Modern Scottish Poets*.

BEACONSFIELD—1879.

An emperor may raise a man to rank,
And kings and queens place subjects near the throne;
But neither power a genius has to thank
Who soars aloft through merits of his own.

His haughty compeers laughed—they listen now :
 The “Jew” has topp’d the high cliff of the realm ;
 Still bitter envy looks up, wondering how
 He reached the goal, and steers the British helm.
 Steer on, triumphant in thy honoured height !
 An envious crew has never made thee yield ;
 A nation’s love is centred in its might—
 Thou art its centre, dauntless Beaconsfield !
 Long may the sons of Britain tread thy ways,
 Long may her daughters seek to sing thy praise.

MY ANNIE AN’ ME AT HAME.

I’ll sing to my dearie wi’ heart licht an’ cheerie,
 An’ sit doon aince mair ’neath the hawthorn tree ;
 ’Twas there I first met her, an’ love’s golden fetter
 Tied heaven’s ain knot roun’ my Annie an’ me.

Her heart wi’ love’s lowein’—she’s fair as the gowan
 That spring brings to licht on the bonnie green lea :
 Nae wonder I lo’e her—there ne’er was a truer—
 We’re happy thegither my Annie an’ me.

I’ll ever protect her, an’ mair than respect her,
 An’ sing to her praise till the day that I dee ;
 An’ where “there’s no night there,” eternally light there,
 We mean to be right there, my Annie an’ me.

SWEET KILLINDEAN.

Sweet Killindean, sweet Killindean,
 Enraptured is my heart I ween,
 A “sheltering shade,” a “leafy screen,”
 Are always nigh,
 As wimpling through a woodland scene
 You onward hie.

A maiden loves thee, so do I,
 As on thy soft green banks I lie,
 And hear thy waters gurgling by
 Her humble cot :
 Inspiring sound that draws me nigh
 Forsakes thee not.

Thy living, lyric, limpid song,
 Thy mystic music soft or strong,
 Ne'er fails to keep me musing long
 As in a dream ;
 'Tis heaven to hear the feathered throng
 Beside thy stream.

The little minstrels love to hear
 Thy tempting brooklet sweet and clear :
 Oh ! would that all our course could steer,
 Both morn and e'en,
 Uninterrupted, like that dear
 Sweet Killindean.

HE'S AN M.P. NOO.

I'll ne'er forget wee Jamie, tho' I leeve Methuselah's age—
 He's an M.P. noo :
 A callan' at the schule I mind flew at 'm in a rage,
 An' swore he was the hoolet frae his grannie's wooden cage ;
 But Jamie passed in silence, an' nae wordy-war wad wage—
 He's an M.P. noo.

He shied frae a' companions, an' sat stride-legs on a spar—
 He's an M.P. noo :
 He sat thumpin' at the thinkin' like a philosophic star,
 But was first to play "Sir Colin" when we aped the "Crimean War,"
 An' could tak' the "heichts o' Alma" without either wound or scar—
 He's an M.P. noo.

He never cared a button then for ony ither game—

He's an M.P. noo :

Oor ba's, an' bats, an' dragons he wad scoff them a' to shame,

But whae'er mentioned "Bannockburn," or "Waterloo" should
name,

Ye'd see his brilliant black een licht wi' glorious martial flame—

He's an M.P. noo.

I mind when Jamie left the schule aff to the darksome pit—

He's an M.P. noo :

Wi' lamp, an' flask, an' ragged duds, I think I see him yet,

An' won'ered if the puir wee chiel for "drawin'" half was fit ;

But Providence has ither wark the faithfu's bound to get—

He's an M.P. noo.

I glory in the callan' an' here seek to sing his praise—

He's an M.P. noo :

He's had mony ups an' doons in life, an' mony knacky ways,

But aft declared "I carena, chaps, what onybody says

As lang's I'm on the richt line lichted wi' its golden rays"—

He's an M.P. noo.

He lo'ed his dear auld grannie weel, an' mourned beside her bier—

He's an M.P. noo :

His heart is kindness to the puir, an' serves them twice a year ;

He's an honour to oor country, an' may rank wi' prince or peer,

An' this perseverin' callan's ever welcomed wi' a cheer—

He's an M.P. noo.

I won'er next what hopefu' youth like Jamie'll get on—

He's an M.P. noo :

Tho' an orphan, let him sing this lilt, he'll find he's no alone,

An' there's mony grand examples that are langsyne deid an' gone,

But oor gallant Jamie's leevin', an' still shines where ithers shone—

He's an M.P. noo.

UNCO LANG ABOUT IT.¹

Just listen to an auld maid's sigh
 That leeves her lane sae eerie,
 An' thinks that a' the lads are shy
 'Cause nane will be her dearie.
 I wish that John would marry me,
 Fu' aft his breeks I've clootit;
 But, oh! I doot it's no to be—
 He's unco lang about it.

Chorus—You're unco lang about it, John;
 Oh! hoo I sit an' weary,
 An' wish you'd put your plaidie on,
 An' come an' be my dearie.

Oh! dae ye min' when first we met
 Wi' hearts as licht's a feather,
 An' hoo ye said you'd ne'er forget
 My wee cot 'mang the heather?
 Oh, come awa'! you've nocht to fear,
 But come an' never moot it;
 Alane I'm sittin' sighin' here—
 You're unco lang about it.

You ken there's nane here but mysel',
 The nichts are dark an' dreary,
 An' Boreas whistlin' doon the dell—
 O John, but I am eerie!
 The ingle-side fu' snod I keep,
 Sae come an' dinna doot it;
 Then fareweel sighin' through my sleep—
 You're unco lang about it.

Sae John threw on his tartan plaid—
 Nae langer wad he tarry,
 But crossed the moor, an' in he gaed
 An' made the match wi' Mary.

¹This and the two following songs are taken from the author's domestic cantata, *Ne'er-day Nicht*.

Tho' promised lang he kept his word,
 Tho' mony years 'twas dootit ;
 But noo the wee cot has its lord,
 An' bairnies play about it.

Let promises aye come to pass,
 Deceivers a' uprootit ;
 If e'er ye promise, tak' the lass,
 Tho' unco lang about it.

UP ON DADDY'S KNEE.

Bonnie Jessie, sweet wee Jessie,
 Wi' the sparklin' e'e ;
 Ever cooin', ever wootin'
 Up on daddy's knee :
 Hoo I lo'e your een sae blue,
 Plump roon' face an' sweet wee mou' ;
 Look again, my lamb, an' coo
 Up on daddy's knee.

My smilin' wean, beguillin' wean,
 Loupin' fu' o' glee,
 I ne'er can weary wi' my dearie
 Up on daddy's knee.
 Jist as clean 's a siller preen,
 O thae gleg bewitchin' een—
 Dearest wean that e'er was seen
 Up on daddy's knee.

Heaven bless ye, let me kiss ye
 After that wee prayer :
 Jessie's sleepie—whaur's her creepie ?
 There 's her cradle there.
 Sleepin' noo 's my ain wee doo—
 Far aboon the lift sae blue
 May kind angels watch ye through—
 Better guides than me.

WE'LL AWA' TO TORBANEHILL.

We'll awa' to Torbanehill
 Where the blaeberries grow ;
 Oh, I lo'e the plantin' still
 Wi' its heathery knowe :
 Youthfu' scenes—aye cherished dear—
 Fain my heart again wad steer
 'Cross the Almond water clear
 To auld Torbanehill.

We'll awa' to Torbanehill
 Where the wee linties sing,
 An' the mavis by the rill
 Mak's the clear woodlands ring.
 Oh ! the thocht o' yon auld knowe
 Kinnles love into a lowe,
 That I fain again wad rowe
 Ower at Torbanehill.

We'll awa' to Torbanehill,
 Where my Annie an' me
 Hae gane linkin' by the mill
 To yon hawthorn tree ;
 Where the laverock soared above
 Chantin' strains that wooers love,
 While in Eden we wad rove
 Ower at Torbanehill.

WE A' HAE MICKLE NEED.

As we ponder o'er the rustle, an' the bustle, an' the strife
 To gain an independence in the humble walks o' life,
 Hoo aft we cajole selfishness an' smile on graspin' greed
 When we should lo'e ilk ither as we a' hae mickle need.

There's strife in every circle o' oor great commercial world ;
 Ahint the counters o' oor shops the battle-flag's unfurled ;
 There's war amang oor kirk folk wi' their government an' creed—
 O' universal brotherhood we a' hae mickle need.

We wonder as we hear o' war 'mang folk wha prattle peace
 What is there in creation that wad gar sic warfare cease?
 We canna fin' the antidote in a' we think or read
 Unless we lo'e ilk ither as we a' hae mickle need.

It's sair an' sad reflection as we think on what should be;
 It's heartless contemplation when we canna a' agree:
 Oh! that the Great Omnipotent wad come wi' lichtfu' speed,
 An' mak' us lo'e ilk ither as we a' hae mickle need.

VICTORY.

Brightest and best of the battles we've fought yet,
 Dauntless and bloodless the foe we'll subdue;
 Myriad souls will be rescued and taught yet
 There ne'er was a conflict so noble and true.
 Let every honest man
 Rally around our van,
 Down with the demon drink, scatter the foe;
 He's a coward would flag on
 The rear of M'Lagan,
 Who sweeps to avenge Caledonia's woe.

"Drink," cried the greatest voice Britain has list to,
 "Direr than pestilence, famine and war:"
 Haste every statesman, then, buckle your best to,
 And conquer this scourge every nation would scar.
 Rally then, rally then,
 Strike every damning den—
 Never a halt till the battle be o'er:
 God and His might with us,
 Courage and right with us,
 Thus every foe hath been vanquished before!

Glorious banners of love come to greet us,
 Glowing hearts up from the deepest despair;

Children, though ragged, enraptured to meet us,
And who for their sakes would not anything dare ?
Rally then, rally then,
Strike every damning den—
Never a halt till the battle be o'er :
God and His might with us,
Courage and right with us,
Thus every foe hath been vanquished before !

Hark to those glad acclamations from Heaven,
Down through the peerless blue vault of the sky,
Cheering the victors who nobly had striven
To conquer the foul fiend or manfully die.
Rally then, rally then,
Strike every damning den—
Never a halt till the battle be o'er :
God and His might with us,
Courage and right with us,
Thus every foe hath been vanquished before !

JOHN ALLAN.

Born 1850.

JOHN ALLAN was born at Bathgate on the 14th of April, 1850, and received his education at the Bathgate Academy.

After leaving school he served his apprenticeship to the engineering trade at the Bathgate Chemical Works, and some eighteen years ago went in this capacity to the Chemical Works at Addiewell, where he has since resided.

Mr Allan has been an occasional contributor of verse to the *West Lothian Courier* for many years; but owing to the variety of signatures which in his modesty he persists in affixing to his productions he is not so well known as he deserves to be.

Naturally of a quiet disposition, he is only seen at his best in the company of his friends, or in the congenial society of a brother bard.

Some years ago the poetical contributors of the *Courier* were wont to hold high holiday on the banks of the Avon "when simmer days were lang," and on such occasions in the company of his friends, Messrs Orrock, Fleming and Black, he was generally the soul of geniality and glee.

Mr Allan has long been prominently identified with the volunteer movement in the county, and is generally found in the list of prize-winners of his company.

On the tragic death of the Prince Imperial in Zululand he wrote a poem entitled *The Last Farewell*, which the

Empress Eugenie acknowledged by sending the author a letter in which she expressed herself as "much touched by the beautiful verses sent her in her great sorrow."

OUR AIN FIRESIDE.

Blithe an' cosy are we a' roun' oor ain fireside,
 For there's naither frost nor snaw roun' oor ain fireside,
 Whaur we strike the hamely key,
 Rich in love an' fu' o' glee,
 Warm's the heart o' big an' wee roun' oor ain fireside.

See yon stream o' kindly licht roun' oor ain fireside,
 Shinin' thro' the darkest nicht roun' oor ain fireside,
 Like the lamp that sheds its ray
 Pointing to that joyful way,
 Aye to guide us nicht an' day roun' oor ain fireside.

There's a smile o' sweet content roun' oor ain fireside,
 For we're canty whaur we're kent roun' oor ain fireside,
 An' the bliss we seem to ken
 Springs within that cosy den
 Whaur we rin baith but an' ben roun' oor ain fireside.

See the bairns we like to share roun' oor ain fireside,
 Let us mak' them happy there, roun' oor ain fireside,
 Like the merry humming bee
 Sportin' ower the floo'ry lea
 Never idle they maun be roun' oor ain fireside.

Let us guide their little feet, roun' oor ain fireside,
 In the path whaur a' can meet roun' oor ain fireside,
 Whaur there's naither grief nor pain,
 In that hame we'll meet again,
 'Tis the promise He has gi'en roun' oor ain fireside.

Like the stream o' kindly licht roun' oor ain fireside,
 We maun gather there at nicht roun' oor ain fireside;
 When the sun sinks in the west,
 Leaves behind his golden crest,
 We can trust an' gang to rest roun' oor ain fireside.

ROYAL ROBIN.

O, Robin Gib, I'll sing to thee,
A name weel kent in oor countrie,
A blyther chiel ye wadna see
Amang the lads, than Robin.

For Robin Gib a king was he,
Royal Robin, royal Robin ;
For Robin Gib a king was he,
Robin, royal Robin.

Noo, Robin got the king to say
That he wad let him reign a day,
Upon the throne the king portray,
And I shall be your Robin.

King Robin's reign was short and sweet,
But justice mak's the law complete,
And Robin tak's a castle seat
That bears the name o' Robin.

The king saw through his jester's plot,
And tried to stop him ere he got
The lands sign'd ower, but Rab wad not---
" For I am king," cried Robin.

" Noo, what I did ye 'll no deny
'Twas just the king, sae pass it by,
And tak' yer throne, King James, and try
And mak' a king like Robin."

The king took Robin ower to France
To see his queen, and get a dance ;
But neither king' nor queen wad chance
To shak' a fit wi' Robin.

For Robin Gib a king was he,
Royal Robin, royal Robin ;
For Robin Gib a king was he,
Robin, royal Robin.

THE AULD E. U. KIRK, BATHGATE.

The founder's awa' and the auld kirk must follow,
 The voice o' the preacher is silent for aye,
 And the happy connexion will raise up anither
 Whaur oor forefathers worshipped in day after day.
 There's no mony left noo that saw the beginning
 And followed the Morisons on to the end;
 They ha'e planted the seed, and we'll see to the harvest
 And gather the sheaves they ha'e left us to tend.
 What mem'ries belang to the auld hamely structure!
 The sermons there preached by the bravest o' men!
 Wi' a message o' love and a lamp to the people,
 Bringin' licht oot o' darkness to mony we ken.
 They can' far and near like the auld Covenanters
 To join in life's psalm in the morning o' grace,
 Wi' a happy desire in their hearts to gang forward
 And life everlasting their portion and place.
 The auld family ties are a living connection—
 What friendships we've formed in the kirk that's awa'!
 But the auld and the young ha'e shook han's wi' the pastor,
 And a Kirk¹ in the pulpit's the best kirk o' a'.
 He's a link in the chain that is joining the circle,
 A piece o' the auld kirk built into the new,
 To preach the glad tidings that lead to the Saviour,
 For He is the door that we ha'e to pass through.
 And like the foundation 'twill stand firm for ever
 Whaur Morison preached and the auld kirk aince stood;
 And the fruits o' thy labours be blessed like the ither,--
 They've shown by their works they ha'e laboured for good.
 'Tis a labour o' love we ha'e joined in the Union
 To comfort the weary and soothe the oppressed,
 Wi' a friendship that springs frae the ane to the ither;
 We can a' share that love if we lean on His breast.

¹ The Rev. William Kirk, M.A., the present minister.

The auld kirk 's awa' whaur we a' sat thegither
 Fu' coey and snug in the auld-fashioned pew,
 Whaur we joined in the praise wi' oor faither and mither ;
 But broken 's the cord and we canna join noo.

THE BONNIE, BONNIE BAIRNS.

The bonnie, bonnie bairns at nicht are gathered roun' the fire,
 Fu' happy in their mother's love—the father can admire ;
 'Tis like the chickens that the hen aye haps aneath her wings :
 We canna hide 'tis roun' the young the same affection springs

That draws oor hearts thegither here like magnets to the pole,
 And tho' it may be dark at times the best way is to thole :
 There's aye a silver lining when the storm-clouds blaw awa',
 And a balm for every trouble in the day we never saw.

Tho' puir oor lot yet strong in faith, and rich in love beside,
 And loved by a' the bairns we ha'e aroun' oor ain fireside ;
 That mak's a heaven in the breast that riches canna gi'e—
 The bonnie bairns mak' love at hame to mony a ane like me.

I think it is a gey queer hoose that hasna a bit cat,
 And mair than that, it's jist as bad that keeps nae parritch pat ;
 But O, it's waur ten thoosand times the hoose withoot a bairn !
 There's nae sweet cuddle doon at nicht, nae mother's kiss to earn.

They're only at the garden gate to stand and look within,
 And see the bonnie floo'rs in bloom that neither toil nor spin ;
 Nae doot they feel an unco want that hae nae bairns ava—
 O, woman, if ye had yer say, ye wad hae ane or twa !

For it mak's a wife a mother, and a mother mak's a hame,
 And what is hame withoot her but a hame without a name ?
 For it looks a sad forgotten place—a hame it canna be—
 Unless there is a bonnie bairn to crown that mother's knee.

There's aye a cuddle and a kiss before they gang to sleep ;
 The mother says the bairnie's prayer, to watch the lambs and sheep,
 To Him wha guides us safely hame across life's stormy sea—
 A heaven on earth is love at hame among the bairns sae wee.

MRS JANE WADDELL DALZIEL.

THE following poems are taken from *Rhymes from Daisyland*: a booklet of verses issued in 1895 by Mrs Dalziel of Stoneyburn Farm, near Addiewell, which she published for the benefit of Longridge United Presbyterian Church. Mrs Dalziel is possessed of a sensitive and kindly sympathetic nature, which makes itself manifest in her life as in her poetry.

Her residence is on the borders of the wide moorland district, in one of the quiet places of the earth, and it is only natural that many of her poems should breathe the restfulness which ever pervades the "meditative moors."

THE PASSING SPRING.

Thou art come, sweet spring-time of the year,
With all thy lovely train;
The tuneful bird upon the tree,
The honeyed flower sipped by the bee,
Once more revive again.

The cuckoo's well-known voice is heard
With joy 'midst woodland bowers,
And the thoughts turn back to childhood's day,
In fancy we seem again to play
Amongst the bright spring flowers.

The swallow has come from distant lands
To hail the passing spring,
And busy he keeps constructing a nest
In the window corner, where he loves best
To place that curious thing.

Glad spring, thou hast a pleasant reign
Of love and beauty rare ;
I cannot yet bid thee adieu
Although thou 'rt fading from my view,
And summer be more fair.

But alas ! I must bid thee farewell,
For thou wilt soon depart ;
Still thoughts of spring in memory will
Be retained with pleasing remembrance still
In recesses of the heart.

Yes, lovely spring, we know thou wilt
The flowers again restore ;
But can'st thou restore the broken heart ?
Or cause it to have in life's joys a part ?
Ah, no, no, nevermore !

LINES TO BRAEHEAD.

Home of my fathers, thou art fading fast away,
Now thy walls look old and worn, and thy roof goes to decay.

Home of my father, where his childhood's years were spent,
To thee my eager footsteps stray, on thee my thoughts are bent.

Home of my fathers, ah ! another claims thy lands,
Another calls thee now his own—thou 'rt in a stranger's hands.

Oh ! could I see thee as thou wert in days gone by,
When sorrow had not crossed thee, nor made thy inmates sigh.

Methinks I see thee as thou wert in days of yore,
And hear the voice of children round thy hospitable door.

The poor were always welcomed, and so kindly pressed to stay,
And never coldly treated, nor were hungry sent away.

Home of my fathers, like them thou 'lt soon be gone,
And mingled with forgotten things as years pass swiftly on.

My dear ancestral home, I will go to thee once more,
I'll look upon thy well-known roof, and linger by thy door.

Home of my fathers, tho' sad thoughts within me wake,
Yet I will visit thee again for that dear father's sake.

THE WRECK OF THE "INDIAN CHIEF"

OFF THE ESSEX COAST.

January 6th, 1881.

The sea was quiet on the Essex coast,
Its waters were rippling bright,
And light o'er the waves sped the "Indian Chief,"
But a storm arose ere night.
The waves began to surge, and the wind
Had a sound like a mournful tale,
And a lurid light loomed in the sky,
Foreboding a dreadful gale.

On board the men were hard at work
For an awful storm to be,
And bravely they toiled, for the goal was life,
And the home they might never see.
The captain shouted along to the mate,
"Let down the mizzen mast,
Both fore and aft must all be clear
Before we may call avast."

No signal can be heard to-night
For the tempest's direful noise;
Sure the storm-king in wrath his hand has raised,
And in anger has raised his voice.
No signal-gun can be heard—no sound
Save the sea's tremendous roar;
But rockets flashing amid the gloom
May bring succour from the shore.

Now thirty long and weary hours
Had seen them struggling on ;
To their lights there came no response from land,
And hope seemed almost gone.
Full many a pang would rend their hearts,
And prayers ascend on high,
As the water-mountains rose and fell
Like a meeting of earth and sky.

There many a hardy seaman bold
Got a grave in the ocean vast,
And few, ah ! so few of that gallant band
Escaped with life at last.
Now sorrow reigns in the mariner's home,
Grief and anguish their bosoms swell ;
And bright hopes are forever blasted
In that sudden, sad farewell.

TO A SKYLARK.

Thou 'rt soaring above me
In yonder blue dome,
Is earth but thy footstool
And cloudland thy home ?
Thou 'rt ever rejoicing,
Nor knowest thou sadness,
Thy breast swells with mirth
And thy song trills with gladness.

Tho' clouds shadow o'er me
Thy sunshine's still fair,
For thou art exulting
'Midst bright pleasures rare.
Thou surely art perfect
In love and in joy,
And thy happiness pure
Without base alloy.

But now thou art quickly
Descending to earth,
And hushed is thy warbling,
And silent thy mirth.
Thy weary, tired form there
Thou surely wilt rest,
And sleep softly steal o'er
That wild throbbing breast.

Rest there now, sweet bird,
On thy soft grassy bed,
The daisy's fair bosom
Shall pillow thy head ;
And when thou awakest
From slumber again,
Anew thou mayest warble
Thy glad trilling strain.

JOHN MACLURE.

JOHN MACLURE was born in the parish of Colmonell, South Ayrshire, where his father had an extensive sheep farm. Shortly after this event the family removed to the farm of Barvennan in the neighbouring shire of Wigtown. The subject of our sketch received his education partly from tutors in the family, and partly at Barrhill village school, subsequently attending Glasgow University. Some twenty-three years ago Mr Maclure came on business to Bathgate, where the charms of the lady who ultimately became his wife constrained him to remain, and so become an adopted son of our county. He is engaged in the seed trade, which he has successfully prosecuted for over twenty years, and is a member of the firm of J. Maclure & Co., seedsmen, Edinburgh and Bathgate.

In 1874 he published a poem in five cantos, entitled *Echoes from Sunny-land*; and this volume, from which all our selections are taken, comprises nearly all his contributions to poetry. It owes its origin to the loss of his beloved sister, Mary, who died in the flower of her youth. She was of a singularly amiable and sweet disposition, happy and vivacious, and was highly gifted with intellectual endowments which she had diligently cultivated. Her death was very keenly felt by the author, and he longed for some reminiscence of one so dear to him. This took the form of a few paragraphs in verse; but, as he wrote, incidents, both real and ideal, multiplied to such an extent that he resolved to issue the work in book form. The

event has proved the wisdom of such a course. The poem, which is well-sustained throughout, treats of the joys and sorrows of the humble shepherd and cottar, and depicts Nature in all her ever-varying moods. Days of sunshine and nights of storm; the budding spring, dressed in "the living garment of God"; the full-blown beauty of the rose-crowned summer; the bountiful autumn, and the utter desolation of winter on the upland wildernesses: it is from these that he draws his inspiration. There are a few lyrics interwoven with the general theme, and these lend an additional charm and variety to the poem. In 1887 Mr Maclure, under the pseudonym of "M. N. Herbert," published a novel, *By the Cliff's Brow*; besides which he has been an occasional contributor of Scottish sketches to *Scottish Nights* and other periodicals. In the busy life which he leads he has few opportunities for poetic or prose composition, and that he has done so much can only be attributed to his wise utilisation of the spare minutes of life. There is a sketch of him, with poetic selections, in *Modern Scottish Poets*.

SCOTLAND'S MARTYRS.

Scotland, thou holdest in thy trust
Much of thy martyred children's dust :
Thy glens, thy hills, and moorlands drear
To them how oft have given a bier !
Their ashes, scattered far around,
Have made thee consecrated ground.
Thence Phoenix-like arose, benign,
The sprite of Liberty divine
To bless our soil, and from thy shore
Waft kindred weal the nations o'er.
What though no storied marble tell
Where now they rest or how they fell,

Be honoured who their lives did give
That we in freedom's lap might live :
Be, too, revered each nook and glen
Where sleep those sacrificial men.

THE OLD YEAR AND THE NEW.

Now scowling winter comes apace
With scarred and weather-beaten face.
His beard is iced and grey ;
He flings the snows around his way :
His breath dull vapour dense distils,
Which fold in gloom the upland hills.
He bids cold shiverings on us seize,
And howls among the leafless trees.
No singing birds await his tread,
And flowers lie frozen in their bed.
Now holds the sun a fitful sway,
Oft banished from his realm all day :
Yet is not winter always drear—
There's beauty in the circling year.

And now that noted day is near
Which ever marks the circled year,
When hoary Time, of youthful feet,
Re-yokes his car with coursers fleet
Before earth's giddy children, who
With Bacchic songs come forth to view
While th' solemn-visaged charioteer
Now posts him forth on his career
To the Eternal : whither we
All wend in motley company,—
Oft heedless, spurning sober thought
For passing joys unwisely bought.

'Tis past, 'tis gone, the olden year,
And o'er it falls full many a tear,

As those retrace its vanished day
Where loves and hopes entombed decay.
And the New-Year hath come this morn,
On car of grey-beard Winter borne ;
And Hope's sweet tones our slumbers stay
Ere from the skies descends young day ;
And kindling joys impatient bear
Us forth that others these may share.
For Joy is not a miser sordid
That loves to see his treasures hoarded ;
But longs to fling her gifts around,
Whence, multiplied, her stores abound.

IN THE DUSK PINY SHADE.

In the dusk piny shade
That embraces the glade
'Tis my joy to stray
When the noontide ray
Shooteth fiery down,
The green plain scathing brown.

Then I love to lean
'Neath the leaf-twined screen
On the soft, soft bank,
Clad with mosses rank ;
Where in twilight I seem,
And pursue my day-dream.

Oh, my Mary ! how sweet
At high noon our retreat
In the dew-gleaming grot
Where the feath'ry ferns float,
And cool airs the brows lave
Thro' the woodbines that wave.

Oh ! how grateful to lave
My young feet in the wave
Of the pine-shadowed spring,
Where the white pebbles ring
As it tinkles its way
In a sylvan lay.

And mine eye hath delight
From its wavelets so bright,
Which like faery gems burn
In their moss-wreathen urn
As they shimmer and play
To the pert prying ray.

Oh ! 'tis joyous to me
From the fierce heats to flee
Where the foxglove's bell
In the shade loves to dwell ;
There to gather the flowers
In their leafy bowers.

And there let me stray
Till hies westward the day,
When the cool breezes sigh
In the piny boughs high,
And I hear the loud swell
Of the curfew's knell.

O, WOMAN FAIR !

O, woman fair !—the fairest sight
That may the eye of man delight—
More soft thy mould, more fair thy cheek,
Impulsive, loving, trustful, meek ;
Conscious of weakness, seeking stay,
As th' vine on prop its hold doth lay :
Man's lot, hence, meetly formed to share,
Solace and softener of his care.

As breath of Spring upon the flower,
Thy gentle presence owns a power
Which lordly man must ever own ;
By which he's blest or overthrown.
Use wise that power, a power which may
The sage's breast, the monarch's sway ;
And if mayhap thy conquering charms
Beckon to thee a lover's arms,
His love with a meet love requite
If thou therein dost take delight.
But woo not by one look his flame
Who may not, dare not, e'er thee claim,
Else may'st thou vex another's rest,
And wing an arrow to thy breast.

THE DIGNITY OF LABOUR.

Ye husbandmen, 'tis yours to bear
A portion of th' allotted care ;
Yet in your simple, frugal life,
Removed from frets of urban strife,
Methinks 'tis yours to know content
More than is to the many sent.
Haply ye toil for spare reward,
And th' ends to meet may find it hard ;
But what your simple wants demand
Each day provides with friendly hand.
Employment yours by Heaven ordained,
Ere guilt on earth a lodge had gained,
And still the least by avarice stained.
The first in point of time, nor less
Th' exalted rank its claims possess,
Since none its generous aid may spare
Though he earth's fairest sceptre bear.
Be honoured, then, the husbandman
With horny hands and face of tan.

MY LAND, MY NATIVE LAND, FAREWELL !

My land, my native land, farewell !
It is my last adieu ;
Aye shall thy mem'ries with me dwell
Though sunnier shores I view.

Dear Scotia, how my bosom's knit
To thy sky-soaring fells,
Where I in childhood's days did sit
And pluck the heatherbells.

Thou sanctuary of Freedom blest,
And seat of patriots free ;
Thou land of hallowed Sabbath rest,
I, grieving, turn from thee.

Farewell, poor cot with rushes spread,
Hid 'mong yon heather braes ;
Earth's dearest home, thou lonely shed,
The seat of my young days.

Farewell, thou rustic house of prayer,
Where, on the sacred day,
I bent the knee with reverent air,
And taught my lips to pray.

Once more, farewell ! each stream and glen
With teeming mem'ries dear ;
Ye mountain birds, thou thrush and wren,
All claim my parting tear.

ROBERT FLEMING.

Born 1856.

ROBERT FLEMING was the youngest of a family of ten, and was born at Bathgate on the 3rd of June, 1856. His father was a blacksmith in the town, but died while the subject of this sketch was a mere child. His mother, like many another noble-hearted woman, broke down in the struggle to make ends meet, and the lad was relegated to the care of an elder brother with whom he resided for several years. Having received a rudimentary education at the Bathgate Academy, he, at the early age of eleven, entered the service of ex-Provost Johnston, printer and stationer, as a message boy and thereafter as an apprentice printer. Here he remained for some time, when he transferred his services to Mr Watson, bookseller, who, a year or two later, began the publication of the *West Lothian Courier*, and to Mr Fleming fell the duty of setting up the first stickful of type for the new venture.

Just before the completion of his apprenticeship he crossed the Border in order to perfect his experience as a compositor, and for some time was employed on a morning newspaper at Bradford.

On returning to Scotland he re-entered the *Courier* office, where he remained but a short time, and for the next year or two we find him working in various parts of Scotland.

In 1880, while in Aberdeen, he doubled his joys and halved his cares by marrying one who, as a true help-meet,

has done not a little to stimulate and cheer him in the uphill struggle.

About this time Mr Fleming discarded the compositor's case for the reporter's pencil, and in this capacity went to Linlithgow in 1883 in the interests of the *Falkirk Herald*—a newspaper which attains its jubilee this year. So assiduously did he throw himself into his new duties that the proprietors appointed him local editor of the *Linlithgowshire Gazette*, which position he still retains. In an interesting article entitled "Ink Portraits of Scottish Editors," which appeared lately in the *Scottish Pulpit*, his journalistic abilities are thus referred to:—"Mr Robert Fleming is the editor of the *Gazette*, and stands pretty near the head of country reporters in Scotland. He has done good work for the *Herald*, and also for the *Gazette*. A more sociable and large-hearted man than the editor of the *Gazette* does not exist. He lives quietly in Linlithgow, although he has ability that would carry him to the top-most rung of the ladder that leads to journalistic success."

The high pressure at which newspaper work is conducted in our days precludes, to a great extent, the quiet reflective hour so essential to poetical composition; but, notwithstanding this, Mr Fleming has written some of our best local poems, and it is probably only the lack of leisure that has prevented him hitherto from issuing these in a collected form. His effusions have appeared in the *People's Friend* and other miscellanies and newspapers, and biographical notices of him are given in Edwards' *Modern Scottish Poets* and in the *Harp of Stirlingshire*, edited by William Harvey, to which latter gentleman we are indebted for much of the preceding information.

LINLITHGOW PALACE.

"Of all the palaces so fair
 Built for the Royal dwelling
 In Scotland, far beyond compare
 Linlithgow is excelling."—MARMION.

Thou hoary pile, roofless and bare,
 Victim to Time's rough blast,
 How nobly still thou standest there
 A relic of the past :
 For ages long thy shelter'd form,
 With venerable pride,
 Hath braved destruction's wasting storm,
 And desolation's chide.

Ah ! hadst thou power of utterance,
 What tales thou couldst unfold
 Of hideous deeds perform'd, perchance
 By those called brave and bold—
 Of scenes of love and chivalry
 In days when harp and song
 Echo'd the name of bravery
 'Midst many a glitt'ring throng.

Within those old deep-furrow'd walls,
 Long since of beauty shorn,
 Amid the pomp of gilded halls
 A beauteous Stuart was born :
 And there, again, in yon dark room
 Where pilgrims oft have hied,
 Amid a scene of pain and gloom
 The Regent Moray died.

Yes, here fair Scotland's martyr-Queen
 First view'd the light of day,
 And there, beneath yon branches green,
 Her kin would oft-times stray,
 Or linger by the placid lake
 As twilight shadows fell,
 When care nor pain had dared to break
 The brief, but tranquil spell.

Tho' all was not quite sunshine then
Yet few, indeed, could dream
That Mary's trusted countrymen
Would 'gainst her plot and scheme :
Ah ! little recked the infant Queen
That her eventful reign
Should close at last with one dark scene
Which history's page doth stain.

But other monarchs, too, have dwelt
Within those ancient walls,
And at their feet proud knights have knelt,
Obedient to their calls.
Queen Margaret here was wont to mourn
In yonder tower concealed,
And pray for Scotland's king's return
From bloody Flodden's Field.

In yon old hall affairs of State,
In times of woe and weal,
Were oft discussed by nobles great
With patriotic zeal ;
But hushed are now those voices all,
Whose accents used to ring
With fervour through the gilded hall
For country and for king.

But what though foot of monarch now
Treads not these ancient halls ?
Pilgrims shall linger 'neath thy brow,
And muse beside thy walls ;
And while the sands of Time shall run,
Tho' thou neglected be,
Thou 'lt still stand there an image dun
Of rare antiquity.

THE BURGH OF LINLITHGOW'S QUIN-CENTENARY ODE.

Written on the occasion of the Celebration by the Burgh of Linlithgow of the
500th Anniversary of the Granting of a Charter to the Burgh by King Robert II.
in 1389.

To-day Linlithgow rears her head
Amid her turrets old and grey,
And, as with magic touch, opes wide
The portals of Antiquity.
Down through a vista dark and dim
She treads with footstep soft and slow,
And, aided by Time's flickering glim,
Looks back Five Hundred years ago.

The curtain rises slowly on
A dark dominion, mighty, vast,
And in the gloom she feasts upon
The musty records of the past ;
'Mid archives of forgotten lore,
Round which Time's with'ring tempests blow,
She muses on the things of yore,
And days Five Hundred years ago.

And as she ponders o'er the scene
Of ages long since passed away,
She sees that which hath mighty been
Lie mould'ring 'midst a rude decay—
As stately forms of monarchs, who
The sceptre swayed through weal and woe,
Pass slowly on, she seems to view
Strange acts Five Hundred years ago.

And as she peers a host of knights,
The young and bold, the old and bent,
Go trooping past in anxious plight
To where meets Scotland's Parliament :
And lo ! there sits a man—a King,
Careworn and pale—'midst pomp and show ;
His look speaks pain and suffering
Endured Five Hundred years ago.

She hears Contention's angry voice
Ring loudly through the gilded hall ;
Again she sees the weak rejoice
As wrong and tyranny down fall.
She harks the shouts of feudal strife,
And sees the life's blood freely flow,
As man 'gainst man warr'd to the knife
In days Five Hundred years ago.

And as she stands with drooping head
She marvels at the work of Fate ;
She sees her town in ruin laid,
And kith and kin made desolate :
Her Palace and the House of God
'Neath fiery vengeance crumble low—
One more sad, direful episode
Of times Five Hundred years ago.

Th' assassin's hand she sees at work,
Where none are near to save or shield,
While treach'rous hands and cowards lurk
By castle wall and homely bield :
She sees cold-blooded acts portrayed
By those whose eyes with pleasure glow—
What wonder, then, she feels dismayed
At deeds Five Hundred years ago.

But while she sits within the pale
Of that dim and unhappy past
The scene revolves, and she beholds
A brighter future dawning fast :
The stirring times of strife and feud
Begin to vanish sure, if slow,
And Hope, who sigh'd in solitude,
Now trims her lamp to brighter glow.

Reform and Progress lead the van,
 And Truth and Light in divers ways,
 By breaking down the Bigot ban,
 Dispel the prejudicial haze :
 And Right and Justice, with fair Grace,
 Now hand-in-hand together go,
 And seek in union to efface
 Wrongs of Five Hundred years ago.

Yea, happier times are ours to-day
 When soft-eyed Peace joins hands with Mirth,
 And sweet Content holds kindly sway
 By each beloved home and hearth ;
 Prosperity a halo sheds
 O'er precincts once th' abode of gloom,
 And Happiness her soft wing spreads
 O'er cold Adversity's bleak tomb.

And now Linlithgow rears her head,
 And smiles amid her quaint abodes ;
 Her destiny she now hath laid
 On shoulders of her "Fifteen Gods :"
 Her fate she leaves to those wise men,
 And well she knows by day and night
 Their eloquence by tongue or pen
 Shall strike the Wrong and shield the Right.

ROBERT BURNS.

Written for the 129th anniversary of the Poet.

Again return the natal day o' Scotland's Ploughman Bard,
 Whose name the sons o' Scotia aye shall reverently regard ;
 And as aroon' the board we meet his mem'ry to enshrine,
 Our toast shall be—"The Prince o' Sang and Days o' Auld Lang
 Syne."

O' minstrels Scotland's had galore, and aft her vales amang
 The rustic reeds o' peasant bards hae Scotia's beauties sang;
 But far above those warblings sweet, which grieve and cheer by
 turns,
 Are heard the rapturous, melting strains o' glorious Robbie Burns.

On Ettrick Braes auld Jamie Hogg wove many a deathless lay,
 When "the kye were comin' hame" at e'en, and the "Lark" had
 ceased to stray;
 He sang o' faithfu' Flora, wha for puir Prince Charlie mourns,
 But the Shepherd pip'd na half sae clear as did the ploomman, Burns.

Whaur "midges dance aboon the burn" by "Bonnie Craigielea,"
 The couthie Robin Tannahill sang "Loudon's Woods" wi' glee;
 When "Gloomy Winter" was awa' he mus'd wi' heart fu' fain
 On the "Braes o' auld Gleniffer" wi' young "Jessie o' Dunblane."

The chivalrous note o' Wattie Scott resounds both near and far,
 As he sings o' "Jock o' Hazeldean" and gallant "Lochinvar";
 Yet tho' auld Caledonia's harp those bards did sweetly tune,
 They lack'd that magic poer o' him wha sang by "Bonnie Doon."

The story o' "The Auld Hoose," as tauld by Lady Nairne,
 May mak' us wae—nay, mak' us greet like ony guileless bairn;
 But what lament frae human heart mair sympathy has riven
 Than the wail o' him whase soul was wrung for "Mary dear in
 Heaven?"

Gilfillan, too, has woefu' sung, "O why left I my hame?"
 A sang which aye 'mang lyric gems a foremost place shall claim;
 And on the banks o' "Kelvingrove" Lyle's dulcet notes shall ring
 Till Scotia's sons and maids forget "The Auld Scotch Sangs" to
 sing.

And Nicoll—gifted Nicoll—auld Scotland's second Burns,
 In his sangs 'bout hame and kinsfolk still by Ordè Braes sojourns,
 Whaur he watched the playfu' pranks o' her wha fill'd his heart wi'
 glee,
 The daffin', guileless lassockie—his "Bonnie Bessie Lee."

Was e'er mither sae provokit?
Wee Curly Pow ;
To the water cran he's yokit,
Wee Curly Pow ;
Oh ! ye mischief-makin' kelpie,
Sorry tak' ye for a whelpie—
Doon this meenit or I'll skelp ye,
Wee Curly Pow.

'Mong the dishes i' the dresser,
Wee Curly Pow ;
Sure to break a cup or saucer,
Wee Curly Pow ;
There it's noo—ye dinsome craikin',
Sugar-bowl in twa ye've braken,
Od, I'll gie ye sic a whackin',
Wee Curly Pow.

Come then—come to mammie's bosie,
 Wee Curly Pow ;
 See the cradle's warm and cosy,
 Wee Curly Pow ;
 Wheesht ! losh there's the boo-man speakin',
 See, he's at the window keekin',
 Greetin' weans the gangrel's seekin',
 Wee Curly Pow.

Shut your een and sleep fu' bonnie,
Wee Curly Pow ;
Faith he winna get my sonnie,
Wee Curly Pow ;
Hame ye gang, ye feckless foggie,
Wha cares noo for hunkled bogie ?
Sleepin' soun 's oor ain sweet rogie—
Wee Curly Pow.

THE BROOMY BRAES O' HAME.

When far frae kinsfolks, and frae hame,
 Youth wanders wide at will,
 In far off lands where orange groves
 With sweetest music thrill ;
 Tho' fair and beauteous be those climes,
 To him they seem but tame
 Whase heart aye dwells 'mang childhood scenes—
 The Broomy Braes o' Hame.

There may be lands on whilk the sun
 Mair brichtly far hath shone ;
 There may be birds on ither shores
 That sing with sweeter tone ;
 But naught to me sae sweet could be
 As hear the thrush proclaim
 His rousing morning sang upon
 The Broomy Braes o' Hame.

The daisy and the buttercup
 Lie hidden 'mang the dew ;
 The heather aye is bloomin' whaur
 The sweet blaeberries grew :
 And aye the burnie wimples on,
 And ilka thing 's the same
 To me as when I romped about
 The Broomy Braes o' Hame.

Dear haunts o' youth—the braes o' Hame,
 What mem'ries linger there !
 The merry lauch—the hearty shout—
 O' bairnies free frae care ;
 They rise still yet upon my ear—
 I hear ilk cronie's name,—
 O would that I aince mair could meet
 Them on the Braes o' Hame.

IN MEMORY OF JEANIE DOW.

Oh, I'm sad and weary noo
Sin' my Jeanie gaed awa',
And my briest o' grief is fu'
Sin' my Jeanie gaed awa' :
Dull's oor wee fire-en' at nicht,
Whaur she watch'd the dancin' lowe,
Wi' her een aye glancin' bricht,
Oor ain wee Jeanie Dow.

We'll miss her lang and sair
Wi' her prattle and her glee,
And the smile that aye garr'd care
Frae her very presence flee :
Wi' a' her steer and daffin',
Wi' her pawky beck and bow—
Ah ! we'll miss the hearty laughin'
O' oor ain Jeanie Dow.

Tak' doon that baggie frae the wa',
Her spellin' book lay past,
For oh ! my heart maist braks in twa
When on't my e'e I cast.
Ended are a' her schule days here,
For aye the book's closed now,
And never mair the voice we'll hear
O' blythsome Jeanie Dow.

Oh, I canna think it true
That my lassie's lying low,
And that a' oor cheer has noo
Turned to bitter pain and woe ;
But they tell me that ower there,
Wi' a wreath upon her brow,
'Mong the angels a' sae fair
I'll yet meet my Jeanie Dow.

QUEEN MARY'S TREE.

Verses suggested by the Planting of a Seedling of Queen Mary's Tree in the Palace Grounds, Linlithgow, by LORD ROSEBERRY, on the occasion of his Lordship being Presented by the Provost and Magistrates with the Freedom of the Burgh on 24th September, 1886.

O hallow'd ground o'er which of old monarchs have oft-times trod ;
O sacred spot, o'ershadow'd by that once favour'd abode ;
What soil more fitly could receive a relic such as thee,
The offspring of a famous plant—our own Queen Mary's Tree.

In old Craigmillar's fair domain, with every grace and mien,
Thy parent was implanted by the hand of Scotland's Queen,
And now by 'Lithgow's Palace old—scene of her infancy—
We plant a tender seedling of that same Queen Mary's Tree.¹

And who more equal to that task than Scotland's favourite Peer ?
Who better could relate the tale of Mary's sad career ?
What eloquence more rich than his, what words more kind could
be,
While speaking of her mem'ry and that little sacred Tree ?

From the summit of yon ruin grey old Time with placid eye
Looks down upon the little shrub, relic of days gone bye,
And as he peers he seems to say—"When men have ceased to be
I'll tend the growth and blossoming of ill-starred Mary's Tree."

While standing by that hoary pile what thoughts flash o'er the min'
As one in silence muses on the dark days o' langsyne,
When plot and passion held the sway, and when the cruel decree
Reft her of life, theauteous Queen—a form so fair to see.

¹ Tradition points to an ancient sycamore or plane tree in the village of Little France, at the foot of Craigmillar Hill, where the French servants of Her Majesty resided, as having been planted by her. The seed or seedling must have been brought from the Continent, for according to Turner's *Herbal*, this tree was first cultivated in Britain about the time of Queen Mary's return from France. In her time it was the general belief that the plane tree was the sycamore mentioned in Scripture on which Zacchæus climbed to get a glimpse of Christ.

As years roll on the pilgrim will delight to linger here,
And homage pay that mem'ry which to many still is dear ;
And many, when remembering the pangs she had to dree,
Will drop the tear of sympathy beneath Queen Mary's Tree.

And those who love to visit yonder old historic pile,
Or worship at St. Michael's shrine from some far distant isle,
Will now in their sojournings to this spot attracted be
To view that dear memento--ill-starred Mary's famous Tree.

And even good St. Michael's sons who near the spot reside
Will ofttimes pensively recline beneath its branches wide,
And mayhap many yet will tell when far beyond the sea
How they in 'Lithgow's Peel have sat beneath Queen Mary's Tree.

In winter when King Boreas rules, O may thy tiny form
Be spared the deadly onslaught of the wild tempestuous storm ;
And when the budding spring returns may genial Nature be
Exceeding lavish to the wants of fair Queen Mary's Tree.

JOHN WHITE.

Born 1859.

IN JOHN WHITE we have an example of the intelligent Scottish villager, strong in patriotic pride and sturdy independence, whose life, passed amid

“The lowly train of life’s sequester’d scene,”

always carries with it something of the redolence of nature.

He was born at Whitburn in the year 1859, and received at Wilson’s School the education usually afforded to a poor man’s son.

After all, the education of the schools is not the most essential introduction to success or happiness in life, and he who, pitched ever so early or unprepared into the scrimmage of life, yet, with all the manhood that God has given him,

“Does the best his circumstance allows,
Does well—acts nobly—angels could no more.”

He was early apprenticed to the tailoring trade in his native town, which calling he has ever since followed, and now does business on his own account.

Mr White is a devoted lover of the violin, and in his rendition of the old masters—for whom he entertains a feeling akin to adoration—he has acquired more than a local reputation. In this capacity he is in request for the occasional “At Homes” of the neighbouring gentry.

But it is as an exponent of comedy that he has attained most popularity, and has made himself a favourite in all parts of the county. His comic songs are all his own composition, and many of them have been sung with success throughout Scotland. We remember reading in the columns of a local paper of a concert at Fauldhouse, where Mr White, in his inimitable representation of "Aunt Sally," was so effective and life-like in his "get-up" that the chairman, taken by surprise, courteously offered the old lady a chair!

He has wooed more of the Nine than Thalia, however, and we give a few specimens of his effusions apart from the Muse of Comedy.

Lines on Sir David Wilkie's Picture, "THE CUT FINGER."

Wee dumpy, stumpy, toddlin' brat!
 What mischief noo hae ye been at?
 Ye are a plague, an' yet for a'
 Ye're granny's pet an' butter-ba'.

Wheesht! noo, till granny gets a cloot—
 It's naething for to wheenge aboot,
 Or else ye'll dee! look, see the bluid
 Rinnin' doon yer peenie red!

Come yer wa's an' dinna linger,
 An' I will buckle yer bit finger:
 Yer pleadin' een sae bonnie blue
 Aye gar yer granny's heart fill fu'.

Noo that'll dae: ye're hale an' strang,
 An' after this ne'er dae the wrang,
 Or aiblins ye'll get cut in life
 Wi' hantle waur "blades" than a knife.

THE DAWN.

How sweet the overture of life—
 The joy of childhood's happy time—
 The golden gleams that come and go
 Upon the purple peaks sublime.
 Love's ardent fires that inward burn,
 And give our dreams a richer tone,
 Alas ! too soon they pass away,
 The crimson twilight comes anon.

Our youth is full of happy dreams,
 The prime of idle folly,
 Old age of anxious thoughts oppressed,
 And days of melancholy ;
 But still I hold in every stage
 There's something that we can enjoy ;
 But, O ! give me the happy days
 When I was a boy.

THE YELLOW-HAIRED LASSIE.

Air :—" The yellow-haired laddie."

When spring has returned wi' her mantle o' green,
 An' deck'd the bleak plain wi' a dazzlin' sheen,
 An' the grey hills are tinged wi' purple an' gold,
 Then the yellow-haired lassie drives her ewes frae the fold.

Wi' her plaid owre her shoulders an' crook in her han'
 She trips like a fairy oot owre the green lawn ;
 Her cheeks are like roses, an' her twa pawky een
 They sparkle far brichter than starnies at e'en.

Wi' saft golden tresses glancin' bricht to the sun
 Ye'd think that an angel had come frae abune :
 Nae goddess Diana, though ever sae fair,
 Wi' the yellow-haired lassie I e'er wad compare.

She's the toast o' the swains roon' the hale country-side,
 An' mony ha'e socht her to mak' her their bride ;
 An' though it be willed that she winna tak' me
 I'll lo'e the sweet lass to the day that I dee.

ANDREW BARNARD.

Born 1860.

ANDREW BARNARD—eldest son of the author of *Sparks from a Miner's Lamp* and *Chirps frae the Engine Lum*, already referred to—was born at Grangemouth on the 8th of January, 1860; but while he was an infant in arms the family removed to Woodend, Armadale. At the age of twelve he was taken from school and became a message boy; but soon left this for the more remunerative occupation of a coal-miner. He had scarcely been a year at this work, however, when he sustained an injury to his knee which incapacitated him for work of any kind. Four years elapsed ere he was able to be removed from bed, and other three years were spent in the slow and painful progression from perambulator to crutches, and thence to the more satisfactory support of his own legs. While thus thrown aside from the recognised ranks of labour he became a proficient violinist, and alleviated the weary days of pain by knitting, lace-making, tailoring, and latterly as an amateur photographer in which art he has acquired considerable success and attained to more than ordinary skill. On regaining his strength he became an engine-keeper, and is at present employed as an engineer with Messrs W. Muir & Co., Bathville, where his inventive faculty has been the means of introducing some labour-saving machinery which he has patented. When the late James Ballantyne met with the accident which ultimately

carried him away, our friend did not fail to fulfil his duties as a comforter to his "brother in the Muses" and "brother in misfortune," and they continued firm friends till Ballantyne's death. Four years ago Mr Barnard married and built a cottage between Woodend and Armadale, where he resides with his wife and young family—the eldest of whom is the "Wee Fran." mentioned on p. 195.

Though his poems lack the finish and touch of his father's productions, they possess sufficient evidence to show that he has inherited a large share of his parent's facility and felicity of expression in verse. He has not written voluminously: he prefers rather to be the clear little spring than the less pure river, however great.

Mr Barnard finds a place in the *Poetry of the Dell* and in Edwards' *Modern Scottish Poets*, and has contributed some very sweet verse to the local press for a number of years.

THE SPARROWS THAT BIDE I' THE LUM.¹

I'm comin', puir birdies, I never had min'
 O' the wee bits o' breid that ye get,
 An' though ither things aften rin i' my heid,
 That's ae thing I maunna forget.
 Oh! what wad I dae in this dull, dreary place
 If it werena the cheery bit hum,
 An' the visits I get ilka mornin' an' nicht
 Frae the sparrows that bide i' the lum.

¹ The sparrows were life-renters of *The Engine Lum* where his father wrought. The above was written on seeing his father give the sparrows their customary share of his "piece." The sparrows reciprocated the kindness by furnishing Mr Barnard, sen., with a title for his second volume, viz., *Chirps frae the Engine Lum*.

The wee, gutsy gourmands, they tumble an' fecht
 For their meat like a hungry wee wean ;
 But we maun forgi'e them—they're only wee birds,
 An' hae scarce a bit mind o' their ain.
 Sae thankfu' are they when their crapies are fu',
 They carena the reek nor the coom ;
 But dicht their wee nebs, an' awa' they will flee
 To their neebours that bide i' the lum.

The laverock on high, wi' his music sae fine,
 Comes doon aft to gi'e me a ca' ;
 The robin in winter, the blackie in summer,
 The shilfa, the lintie an' a' ;
 But nane fills the want in this lane heart o' mine,
 Nae maitter hoo often they come,
 Like the wee, tousy fellows that bide the hale year
 I' the cracks o' the big, reeky lum.

The big, greedy craws that are juist fleein' by—
 Oh, the scoundrels ! I watched them yestreen
 Flee roond the lum back (oh, the mean, hungry pack !)
 When they thocht that they wadna be seen,
 An' chase the bit birdies an' fricht them sae sair
 To get eatin' their meat—every crumb ;
 But then they've the richt—they live high i' the warl',
 But the speugs—i' the dirty, black lum.

But ne'er mind, my birdies, I'll come back the morn,
 If the gude Lord abune gi'e me health,
 An' I'll gi'e ye a share o' my ain hamely fare,
 For I haena a great store o' wealth :
 An' altho' ilka birdie gaes by ye like stour,—
 Ye ken ilka bee has its bum—
 Nae pride ever enters the wee, honest hearts
 O' my frien's that bide up i' the lum.

MY LOVE AND I.

My love and I sat under a bough
 When our daily work was done,
 While the smiling flowers around us closed
 In the setting summer sun.
 We talked of the hills and valleys fair,
 And lands that are far away,
 As we sat in our sweet and flowery dell
 In the peace of the closing day.

The moon with her pale and silver beams
 Shone out in the clear blue sky,
 The myriad stars were twinkling bright
 In the spangled heaven on high ;
 The murmuring stream rolled gaily on
 Through the rocky, bushy glen,
 The clock of the distant village church
 Was striking the hour of ten :

But still we sat in the soft moonlight
 While the fleeting moments flew,
 And we saw the soft, green, mossy bank
 All wet with the sparkling dew ;
 But little we thought of the hills or vales,
 Or the twinkling stars above,
 Of the fields or flowers, or the dewy grass,
 For our thoughts were all of love.

 OH, HASTE AWA', WINTER.

I sigh for the summer wi' a' its bricht beauty,
 I sigh for the birdies to sing on the trees ;
 The short winter day is sae cheerless an' cauld aye,
 I sigh owre again for the saft summer breeze.

How heartsome to rise on a gay summer morning,
 The sun 'boon the hill in a deep rosy hue,
 An' cull the sweet flow'rets that grow in profusion
 Awa' in the meadows a' covered wi' dew.

I lo'e weel the summer, but lo'e nae the winter,
 Wi' a' its fierce cauld blasts o' snaw, sleet, an' rain ;
 The summer brings pleasures, the bee wi' its treasures,
 But cauld winter nocht brings but sorrow an' pain.

I'm wae for the bairnies, the wee things are gnarled,
 An' shiver wi' cauld 'mang the frost an' the snaw ;
 Their wee hearties tremble, an' aft nip wi' hunger,
 But what care the pitiless cauld blasts that blaw.

Oh, guid-hearted mammies, be kind to the bairnies
 That seek their bit bitie at ilka ane's door ;
 For need drives them oot frae their hovels, puir lammies,
 An' dool to their hearts wadna pity the poor.

Be kind to the birdies that seek our protection—
 The robin, the shilfa, an' wee cutty wren—
 Aye feed them in winter, an' then in the summer
 They'll pay us weel back wi' their sangs in the glen.

Oh, haste awa', winter, an' come ye back, summer,
 An' come back, ye birdies, noo far, far awa',
 An' sing in the gloamin' your blythe lays to cheer us,
 For lanely an' sad are our hearts 'mang the snaw.

IN MEMORIAM.

Come blaw, ye simmer breezes, blaw,
 An' waft your sweet perfume
 Frae aff the tiny briar bush,
 An' scented yellow broom ;
 An' bow your heads, ye gaudy flowers
 That bloom by castle wa',
 For death has ta'en unto himsel'
 The flower amang us a'.

Nae mair on simmer nights at e'en
 We'll see his slender form,
 Nae mair upon the lonely paths
 That skirt the yellow corn ;

Nae mair he'll wander through the glen
O' bonnie Birkenshaw,
For oh, grim death has come an' ta'en
The flower amang us a'.

Nae mair we'll hear his merry sang,
Or see his cheery face,—
The face the lassies lo'ed sae weel,
He had sic ways an' grace ;
Nae mair he'll lead the sportive dance
Oot by the auld schule wa',
For Duncan's gane, fell death has ta'en
The flower amang us a'.

Yet though he's left this weary warl',
This warl' o' cares an' toil,
Where men doon in the dark, damp earth
Like emmets ever moil,
We know his spirit's gone to heaven
Where loud Hosannahs ring,
An' angels shout continually
The praises of our King.

JAMES BALLANTYNE.

1860-1887.

JAMES BALLANTYNE was born at Crindledyke, in the parish of Cambusnethan, on the 13th of May, 1860. His father carried on business as a shoemaker there; but owing to business losses he became a miner. At an early age James was apprenticed to the watch-making trade, but he relinquished this in a short time and also entered the pit. About the year 1880 the family came to reside at the little village of Woodend, near Armadale. So assiduously did James apply himself to his vocation that he rapidly rose from the humble position of a trapper to that of oversman, and he was studying diligently for a manager's certificate when, in the beginning of 1883, his legs were paralysed by an accident which left him a confirmed invalid.

Through the kindness of the Coltness Iron Company and some of his friends a tricycle was procured for him and by this means he was enabled during the gentler seasons of the year to enjoy some measure of outdoor life and exercise. During his illness, which lasted for four years, he began to cultivate a taste for poetic composition, and the effusions of his muse served to beguile many a weary hour. In the company of the poets Barnard—father and son—he found congenial and sympathetic tastes which fostered and encouraged him in his flights of fancy in which he gave promise of higher things. But the seal

of death was already on his brow, and on the morning of 9th September, 1887, he died—

“Died, while the first sweet consciousness of manhood
And maiden thought electrified his soul,
Faint beatings in the calyx of the rose.”

In the autumn of that year a booklet entitled *The Poetry of the Dell*, which his brother bards in Woodend published for his benefit, was issued from the office of the *West Lothian Courier*; but ere it emerged from the press he had passed away. The principal contributors to the little volume were the Messrs Barnard, but it also contains six of Ballantyne's poems and a biographical notice of him. He is also noticed in *Modern Scottish Poets*.

THE MUCKLE MAY FLEE.

(ANGLER'S SONG.¹)

I'll up in the morning an' rig mysel' oot
Wi' my stockings, an' basket, an' tackle sae stoot,
An' aff to the burnie whaur trooties sae slee
Are jumping to nab up the muckle May flee.

An' O! for the fun 'mang the sweet singing rills,
An' the boulder stanes big like to wee frowning hills,
Whaur lies the sleek trootie wi' sharp greedy e'e,
Aye ready to rise at the muckle May flee.

Then O! for the breeze that can dress in a frill
The lang glassy flats wi' their surfaces still,
Whaur lies the big trootie sae bonnie to see
That's plumpy been made by the muckle May flee.

¹ This song has been set to music by the late T. S. Gleadhill. It is published by Mr Joseph Ferrie, 202 Hope Street, Glasgow, who possesses the copyright, and by whose kind permission it is here inserted.

An' O ! for my basket, my rod, an' my reel,
 An' O ! for the trootie, the pike, an' the eel,
 An' wee speckled par, aye sae sportive an' free,
 That jumps a' its pith at the muckle May flee.

An' O ! for the 'oor when back to my hame
 I tak' my big basket weel stowed i' the wame,
 An' O ! for the wife that's happy to see
 A tak' that's been got wi' the muckle May flee.

BONNIE BIRKENSHAW.

Sweet Birkenshaw, thou lovely spot,
 To me thy name is dear,
 To gaze on thee it thrills my heart
 And brings my spirits cheer :
 Oft have I strolled thy scenes among
 When summer made things braw,
 In thy romantic fernie glen—
 Sweet, bonnie Birkenshaw.

Dear Birkenshaw, a name thou hast
 In written verse, I know :
 Of thee the poet Cameron sang
 In days of long ago,
 When in thy glen he used to pass
 The evening hours awa'
 Wi' her, the jewel of his heart—
 Sweet, bonnie Birkenshaw.

And in thy glen, sweet Birkenshaw,
 I've mused on Nature fair,
 And pulled the roses that perfumed
 The summer's balmy air ;
 And oft I've heard the mavis sing
 His song at gloamin' fa'
 Among the groves which grace thy glen,
 Sweet, bonnie Birkenshaw.

And I have loved to sit and hear
The burnie's wimpling sang,
As on its bed it rippled thro'
The boulders gray amang
Before it gained the Wheatock turn,
Near by the "Tree-well" braw,
Where passing lovers oft hae drank—
Sweet, bonnie Birkenshaw.

TO A BLACKBIRD.

Sing, blackbird, sing thy mellow song !
Heed not the gloamin's dusky wing
That, hov'ring, beckons night to come
And o'er the vale her garment fling.

Sing on ! thy mate sits in her nest
In yonder clump of budding trees,
And listens to thy numbers sweet
That wafted are upon the breeze.

No one shall here thy peace disturb,
Sweet songster of this drowsy hour,
When all thy mates in rest are mute
In woodland, glen, and fragrant bower.

Thy song, aye sweet, is sweeter now
When not a tuneful voice is heard
Save lone Barbauchlaw's tinkling stream,
And thy own mellow voice, sweet bird.

THE LAND I WINNA LEA'.

Men talk o' lands beyond the sea
Whose skies are ever clear,
Where orange groves and roses sweet
Their scenery make dear ;

But ah ! for them I dinna care—
I seek not distant bowers—
I'm quite content wi' Scotland's hills,
And bonnie Scotland's flowers.

Auld Scotland's bonnie woods and dells
Aye help to charm my e'e,
And than her glens and streamlets deep
Nae bonnier I see :
The music o' her siller brooks
Aye cheers my Scottish heart,—
Na, na ! for me there's nane sic-like,
Frae them I canna part.

I love her purple moorlands wild.
And tufts o' waving broom
That aye in sunny summer time
Are clad in gowden bloom ;
I love the land where grows the slae
And stately birchen tree :
The scenery o' Scotland dear
I canna, canna lea'.

I canna lea' my native land
Where a' my faithers rest
Deep, deep below the verdant sod
Wi' modest gowans drest :
Their graves and battle-fields o' fame
Are ever dear to me—
My Scotland ! land o' liberty !
I winna, winna lea'.

I like to roam at freedom 'mong
The thistles and the ferns,
And view upon the moorlands quiet
The venerated cairns
Where sleep the noble men of old
Who bravely fought to free
Auld Scotland—land o' liberty !
The land I winna lea'.

TO A SNOWDROP.

Child of the Spring ! thou snowdrop sweet
With cheerful heart we welcome thee,
And thy wee mate, the gowan white,
That decks the lea.

The primrose soon shall haunt the bowers,
The streamlet sides, and verdant braes,
And crocus, too, above the soil
Its head shall raise :

And other flowerets in their time,
When thou art faded, shall come forth
To bloom in warmer breeze than blows
From the cold north.

But ah ! we love thee, modest flower :
Thy presence here doth comfort bring
To cheer the poets and their friends
Who love the Spring.

And in thy slender form we see
God's spirit, power, and love to man,
So for His gifts sing praises sweet,
All ye who can.

ROBERT CONDIE HUNTER.

Born 1861.

ROBERT CONDIE HUNTER was born at Bathgate on 1st April, 1861. Six years later, on his father's appointment to the managership of Wemyss Colliery, the family removed to West Wemyss, where our poet received the primary part of his education under old Paul Burns, a local bone doctor of some repute. On the completion of the usual course he served five years as a pupil teacher, and at the age of eighteen proceeded to Edinburgh University with a view to entering the ministry. Having completed his divinity studies he was duly licensed as a minister of the Established Church in 1890. In the following year he spent some time in connection with a mission in Sutherlandshire, but in the same year he was appointed to the charge of Glenboig mission, New Monkland. During the two years in which he laboured there he succeeded in raising funds for a beautiful little chapel which was opened free of debt.

On leaving Glenboig he had charge of Oldham St. Church, Liverpool, and thereafter officiated for the better part of a year at Coldstream. For the last two years he has devoted himself more to literature than to the pulpit, and in this sphere he has found a congenial element, although he still preaches occasionally.

He has been an extensive contributor of delightful fiction to the *People's Friend*, *Scottish Nights*, and various English magazines, and in this walk of literature has achieved

considerable success. Poetry with him has been decidedly a recreation ; but his poems, nevertheless, are of very high merit and place him among the most gifted of our county bards. They are marked by purity of conception and chaste expression, and in his more reflective poems he attains to the truest poetic elevation, while his amorous effusions are permeated and burn with all the ardour and intensity of a lover's devotion.

OF DEATH : A WISH.

A film of air, a veil invisible,
Is all that lies between us and the Light ;
'Tis but a step incomprehensible,
And we would stand within the Infinite ;
And yet we stumble on as in the night,
And fondle our pet vice without a fear,
Till Light Divine reveals the sin we cherish here.

There is no change in any outward thing
That Death shall bring us in that hour we die.
There is no change that any power can bring
To earth or sea or blue ethereal sky.
But then we shall not see with mortal eye ;
We see all things as God has always seen,
And lowly bow our heads to see what we have been.

Had I a wish, I would not die at morn,
When birds are singing welcome to the day ;
When far up in the heavens with song new-born
The lark invites my timid soul away.
I would not die where all is bright and gay—
'Twould only bring me double shame and pain
To see my sin laid bare where peace and joy doth reign.

I would not die when winter clasps the ground
And brings to Nature's face the pinch of woe ;
And trees in sullen silence spread around
Reluctant arms to meet the feathery snow,
While in the heavens the flakes sport to and fro.
I could not bear the grief, the misery,
To bring my sin before that cold, hard purity.

But when the changing shadows sport and play
And lengthen out beneath the pale moonlight,
And fleeting clouds flit shadows all the way
Along the pathway of eternal light,
Then would I step into the Infinite,
And in the soft quiet shadows find a place,
Where I would bring my sin and meet it face to face.

AN APRIL DAY.

Ae morn, when April was but sweet seventeen,
And lithesome,
She wiped the shades o' nicht frae aff her een
Fu' blithesome,
And looking o'er the world aneath her feet,
She saw nicht fauldin' west her murky sheet,
And Sol pursuing hard the drizzly weat,
And April smiled.

Then up whaur sulky clouds in cantrips whirl,
And vapour,
She rose wi' mony a gleefu' skip and skirl
And caper,
And resting breathless frae her wanton mood,
She hovered o'er a bleak and eerie wood,
And spied a primrose droop in solitude,
And April sighed.

And in her feathery cloud, her choicest bower,
 Maist weary
 She sat her down to brood o'er this puir flower
 Sae eerie ;
 Till floating, unbeknown, abune a hill,
 Whaur grew a solitary daffodil,
 She longed, as did the flower, for some sweet rill ;
 And April sobbed.

She gathered up the skirts o' her frail bower
 Maist blindly ;
 And sighed and cried in bitter tears—a shower
 Maist kindly ;
 Till peepin' o'er the brink wi' tearfu' eyes,
 She saw them lift their heads and bow and rise
 As flowers will do in sunny, weeping skies ;
 And April smiled.

When sorrows fa' like rain-draps frae the clouds
 Abune us,
 And wrinkles in the heart are dreich as shrouds
 Within us ;
 'Twould ease the hungry heart a little while,
 And rain and pain and wrinkles a' beguile,
 To min' that after rain there's aye a smile
 In April days.

How I'LL DO.

Some women gang gyte i' the askin',
 And some canna open their mou's,
 Though every ane kens what's been maskin'
 The pretty wee innocent doos !

I think when the question is poppit
 I'll no hing my heid like a coo,
 Nor will I creep up to his gravit,
 And cheep like a half-drookit doo.

I'll tell him as plain as a rocket
He maunna gang oot and get fou,
He maun keep up supplies for the doocot
If he wants to keep in wi' the doo.

Some women are aye in the wallow,
They're kept in the mire like a soo,
Ye see what's the end, wi' a fallow,
O' a cheepin' submissive wee doo.

I intend to begin as I'll end wi't,
And no hae a thing o't to rue;
My lad maun keep straucht and weel-fendit
Or he'll hear mair than cheeps frae his doo.

IN BONDAGE.

How can I work when a' the day
My heart gangs thumpin' sairly?
When every glint o' Jenny's e'e
Mak's me a' shake wi' ecstasy?
For Jenny has me fairly.

I canna settle at my wark,
I canna mak' a sentence;
No that my learnin' is far ahint,
For I ha'e often been in print,
But Jenny! Sad acquaintance!

My een are dizzy wantin' sleep,
My brain gangs nicht and morn;
She has the very soul o' me
Fast grippit by her bonnie e'e;
I'm feckless and forlorn.

Twa years and mair she's had me fast,
I think she doesna ken o't;
But wae is me! I'm fair possessed,
The thocht o' her won't let me rest,
I'd gi'e a king the len' o't.

How can I work when a' the day
 My heart gangs thumpin' sairly ?
 If Jenny hadna sic an e'e,
 Or hadna glinted it on me,
 I'd work baith late and early.

A SANG OR A WHISTLE.

When a lad, gin I thocht that the road was ower lang,
 I tried to beguile it day-dreamin' ;
 But when a bit aulder I saw it was wrang
 To waste the bricht day only seemin',
 I opened my ears to the laverock and throistle,
 And joined in their joy wi' a sang or a whistle.

Gin a place o' bad omen lay straucht in my way,
 And my heart no sae bold as it should be,
 And nicht comin' doon wi' its mantle o' grey,
 And my een seein' mair than they should dae ;
 Each hair o' my heid micht rise stiff as a bristle,
 But my feelin's got vent in a sang or a whistle.

Cauld care is a lang-standin' freend we maun mind,
 And gi'es me a ca' in the bye-gaun ;
 But I bid him come ben, if he's that way inclined,
 And I coddle him up till the day-dawn ;
 And sometimes he's prickly and sharp as a thistle,
 But meet a' his scowls wi' a sang or a whistle.

THE OLD WALL.

One never knows what is the key
 To open out life's mystery.
 To some a rose, to some a look,
 To others 'tis a cherished book,
 To others still, a quiet nook
 Contains their heart's true history.

To me a low and lowly wall
Contains the secret of it all :
It told my inward eye and ear
Some secrets of another sphere,
Where streams and streams of joy appear :
It was the gladdest mystery.

'Twas little that the eye could see—
A lowly wall and shelt'ring tree ;
But by the inward eye was seen
A continent of joy serene.
I gazed and gazed and entered in :
It gladdened me and saddened me.

'Twas little that the ear could hear—
Only the leaves were rustling near ;
But on the inward ear there comes
Sweet harmony of love-lit hymns,
And sounds of dreamy distant chimes :
I revelled in love's mystery.

And after all that lowly wall
Revealed the secret of it all ;
For there her soft caressing hand
Was but the gentlest magic wand
To lead me to this fairy-land
That held my heart's glad history.

THE TRUE COURSE OF LOVE.

I loved a lass,
Her name—well 'tis no matter ;
Her eyes resembled diamonds, rich in-hue,
Her waist was just the waist that one would woo,
Her dewy mouth made my mouth dewy too ;
Enough just to look at her
To love the lass.

I loved another :
Ten years had on me settled,
And as the morning's blush so she was fair ;
Her charming smile and sympathetic air
Invited me to lay my sorrows bare ;
In her my heart now nestled—
I loved that other.

I loved again :
Another ten had wested
The third time : 'twas the first, my widowed flame,
Though old love kindled up is not the same ;
But then my feelings now are quiet and tame,
And in her I feel rested,
And love again.

GEORGE F. S. SHANKS.

Born 1862.

GEORGE FERGUSSON SMELLIE SHANKS was born in the village of Whitburn on the 31st of March, 1862. In the following year the family removed to Bathgate, where his father carries on business as a blacksmith. George was educated at the Academy there, and afterwards served his apprenticeship to the patternmaking in Bathgate Foundry. In 1888 he removed to Glasgow, where he has since resided. At present he is President of the Glasgow Branch of the Patternmakers' Society, which enjoys the distinction of being the largest branch of that Society in the United Kingdom. As he lives in the suburbs he has many opportunities of making short excursions into the surrounding country.

Mr Shanks has contributed largely to the poetical columns of the *West Lothian Courier*, *Weekly Mail*, and other newspapers for a number of years, and these fugitive pieces, we understand, he intends shortly to issue in a collected form, together with his humorous Scottish readings, of which he has published a goodly number serially. He is in much request as a reader at literary and other meetings, and occasionally supplies the evening's entertainment entirely from his own productions. Mr Shanks is also the author of the operettas, *A Name at Last*, and *The Wizard of the North*.

THE LANG PLANTIN' BURN.

There's a bonnie wee burn wimples doon thro' yon howe,
 'Neath the quick-slopin' bank an' the flooer-covered knowe,
 Whaur aft in oor youth wi' oor daffin' an' glee
 We made days birl roond—thae cronies an' me.

There the tiny wee violet an' primrose sae sweet
 Shone oot frae the green moss sae saft to oor feet,
 When we had been paidlin' the water among
 'Neath the shade o' the trees whaur the wee birdies sung.

An' sic glorious fun as it aft used to be
 To see wha could jump the far'est ower thee,
 An' the echoes wad soond wi' uproarious din
 If ane o' oor number by chance tumbled in.

Oh ! whaur are they noo, a' thae cronies sae gay,
 Wha aft on thy bank spent the lang simmer day ?
 Wide scattered we ken, but whaurever they be
 They aften return in their fancy to thee.

An' there it still wimples an' purls alang,
 Ower the very same stanes to the same sweet auld sang,
 To a new crood o' laddies licht-hearted as we,
 Wha maun a' be wide scattered as we noo may be.

Oh ! bonnie wee burn, as ye wimple alang,
 There's a lesson sae true in the notes o' yer sang ;
 Ye tell us sae plain that though simple ye be
 Yer end is the same as great rivers—the sea.

An' man, like thy waters, thou bonnie wee burn,
 To the source whence he sprung in truth maun return ;
 An' the mightiest monarch, with marvellous fame,
 An' the peasant he rules, maun some day be the same.

Tho' far, far awa' we maun wander frae thee,
 An' dentilies tried by the warld we be,
 It's aye a relief when we musing return
 To the days that we've spent by the Lang Plantin' Burn.

BRIGHT DAYS OF GOLD.

There came to me a vision bright
Of days long, long ago,
Thro' weary years of anxious care,
Thro' many a pain and woe ;
But as on golden wings I rose
And flew into the past,
Those anxious cares were all forgot,
And griefs aside were cast.
Then as in days of old,
Free from all grief and pain,
Happy in dreams of love,
I lived those days again.

I felt the breezes fresh and free
Blow thro' my waving hair,
I saw the brook, so sweet and cool,
With flowerets sparkling fair ;
And one beside me tripped along,
A pretty little maid,
Whose face was sweet as any flower
Within that pleasant glade.
Then as in days of old,
Free from all grief and pain,
Happy in dreams of youth,
I lived those days again.

The vision's gone, but I am still
Beside that little maid,
And, tho' we may be changed since then,
And far from that cool shade,
We still can be as fond as then,
In those bright days of gold,
For love will grow thro' length of years,
And never can be old.
Then as in days of old,
Free from all grief and pain,
Happy in dreams of youth,
I lived those days again.

MY LAD SAE BRAW.

When wintry winds gang soughin' by
 An' snaw comes driftin' o'er the lea,
 When cluds are scuddin' o'er the sky,
 An' eerie stan's the birken tree,
 I mind me o' my lad sae braw—
 His stalwart form I oft reca'.

The snaw lay deep on ilka brae,
 The burns were big in ilka glen,
 That day they marched him far awa'
 To join the gallant Hielan'men;
 An' oh! he looked sae big an' braw—
 His stalwart form I oft reca'.

I pray, if he's no 'mang the deid,
 That he is weel whaur'er he be,
 An' if he's hale I ken he's true
 To native hame, to love, an' me;
 An' aye he'll be to me sae braw—
 His stalwart form I oft reca'.

 LOVE FROM HEART TO HEART.

Love's dream has vanished now,
 Love's happy hour is o'er,
 We must for ever part—
 Part to meet no more;
 And tho' our parting be
 Fraught with the deepest pain,
 We must for ever part,
 No more to meet again.

Oh! so happy were we,
 Happy for one brief hour;
 Little we thought of grief
 When first we knew love's power:

Little we thought that we,
Who loved from heart to heart,
Were destined but to meet,
And, meeting, but to part.

Still in our fancy we
Live in each other's eyes,
And never think upon
The gulf which 'twixt us lies ;
But loving we shall be
Tho' e'er so far apart,—
Lovers till death at last
Shall join us heart to heart.

MRS ALEXANDER DEANS

(née C. E. PETTIGREW).

Born 1862.

AMID the multifarious duties of a farmer's wife Mrs Alexander Deans has found leisure enough to write some poems of sterling merit. Among her earliest recollections are Bathgate and its Academy, to which institution she is proud to owe the better part of her education; and to Mr D. F. Lowe, then Rector of the Academy and now Head-Master of George Heriot's Hospital, Edinburgh, she attributes any literary inclinations she may possess. After completing her pupil-teachership in the Academy she entered the Church of Scotland Training College, Edinburgh, and it was during this time that she first committed herself in "the divine art of poesy" by writing verses for the amusement of her classmates. Having married a Kincardineshire farmer, Mrs Deans now resides near Fordoun in that county. Since 1888, in which year she obtained a handsome prize from the *People's Journal* for an essay on the Training of Children, Mrs Deans has contributed to various magazines and periodicals. Articles on Health and kindred domestic subjects and short stories and poems from her pen have gained for her many prizes in these competitions which have conduced so largely in recent years to the development of young literary talent.

The verse of Mrs Deans is fresh and natural, with no straining after effect, conveying to the reader the impression

that it is the spontaneous expression of the poet's own experience, with whom

“Feeling is a something to be felt,
Not fancied, as is frequently the case.”

Her poems of childhood are pervaded by that subtle simplicity of diction, which, while it is the only appropriate medium of expression, is by reason of its simplicity very difficult of attainment—if indeed that can be called an attainment which wells forth like a pellucid spring from a heart charmed with all that is innocently beautiful in bairnhood.

Mrs Deans has many pleasant recollections of Bathgate, and one of her greatest pleasures is to revisit the home of her youth and spend a few days among the friends and scenes of those

“Lichtsomen days and lang,
When hinnied hopes around our hearts,
Like simmer blossoms, sprang !”

THE STIRKIE'S STA'.¹

What ails my bonnie laddie noo ?
What's brocht that froun ontill his broo ?
His wee bit heart seems unco fou—
Is't him ava
Staunin' wi' waesome, droopin' mou'
Ower at the wa'?

¹ *To be put in the stirkie's sta'*, a phrase applied to a child who receives less attention than formerly from the mother, in consequence of being supplanted by a later arrival. --Jamieson's *Scottish Dictionary*.

Sae bricht an' gay he was yestreen,
 As blithe a bairnie's could be seen,
 Wi' dimplin' cheeks an' lauchin' een ;
 But that's a' gane :
 Nae cantrips noo, nae bairn-wit keen—
 What ails the wean ?

“Come ye awa' inbye to me,”
 His faither says, “an' we will see
 Gin we can redd this up a wee :
 What is't that's wrang’ ?
 I never thocht that ye could be
 Sulky sae lang.”

Slowly he shook his curly heid,
 An' glancin' at the door in dreid
 Ae lang-drawn smothered sigh he gied,
 An' yields a wee ;
 Then sobs a waefu' tale indeed
 On dada's knee.

“I dinna like yon greetin' wean ;
 I wish ye'd send it hame again ;
 I like faur best to be my lane :
 Pit it awa'.”
 Puir, little chiel ! he feels the chain
 O' stirkie's sta'.

“Hoot toots ! but this will never do,”
 Says da, “ye'll spoil your bonnie mou',
 An' waste your een wi' lookin' thro'
 Sae mony tears :
 Ye ken ye are a big man noo,
 A'maist four years !

“Yon little lass has come to bide,
 To learn to walk an' rin an' slide ;
 She'll sune be fit to sit an' ride
 On Tibbie's back :
 Ye'll teach her hoo the reins to guide—
 The whup to crack.”

Quickly he slid doon to the floor,
An anxious look his wee face wore ;
By faither's word he set great store :
 " An' will my mither
Like me as weel 's she did afore
 She got this ither ? "

" Ay, laddie, that she surely will,
Nae ither bairn your place can fill,
You 're mither's bonnie laddie still
 Tho' sair ye've missed her ;
Sae ye maun e'en be kindly till
 Your ain wee sister. "

" I'll like the lassie brawly noo "—
Smiles 'mid the tear-stains breaking through—
He thocht because the bairn was new
 She'd like it best ;
Noo that he kens her love holds two
 His heart 's at rest.

THREE LITTLE KITTENS :

A STORY FOR CHILDREN.

Pretty Pussy Whitepaws had three little kittens,
And every one, just like herself, had dainty, snow-white mittens :
Those pretty kits, so sleek and quiet, so soft, so fat and furry,
They did not look as if they'd give their mother cause for worry ;
But kittens, just like girls and boys, are sometimes rather naughty,
And no exception to this rule were Spunky, Sam, and Spotty !
" My dears," their mother said one day, " I'll take you for an airing,
But you must all walk by my side, and not be rude and staring ;
Be sure you keep your dresses clean, and do not soil your mittens,
And ~~got~~ in Pussydome will be found three prettier little kittens. "
Across the loft and through the byres, and right along the stable,
This well-trained little family marched as fast as they were able :
Just at the barn door Sam forgot to do as he'd been bidden
For he had spied a little mouse 'mong barley nearly hidden.

He made a spring—alas ! poor Sam,—and sprang into a rat-trap !
Ere he could give a single mew the horrid thing went snap-snap !
The farmer passing at the time and hearing all the noise
Thought it must surely be the rats at their unlawful ploys ;
He quietly peeped into the barn, and soon released poor Sammie,
Then gently bound his broken leg, and left him to his mamma.
Poor Mrs Puss she scolded well, she laughed, and cried for joy—
Just think how nearly she had lost her pretty baby boy !
Spunky and Spotty, quite subdued, gazed sadly at their brother,
And then they set to work to help their anxious worried mother.
They cheered the invalid along (how his poor leg was swelling !)
They pushed and dragged, and mewed and howled, until they
reached their dwelling :
There Sammie lay nursed by mamma and his two sisters pretty,
And let us hope he rose again a sadder, wiser kitty.

OUR BABY GIRL.

Laughing eyes of bonnie blue,
Brow of lily whiteness,
Dimples playing peek-a-boo,
Cheeks of carmine brightness,
Rosy lips through which we see
Oft a gleam of pearl,
Just a tottie nearly three—
That's our baby girl.

Dancing here and tumbling there,
Never still a minute,
If there's mischief anywhere
Certain she is in it ;
Keeps the house—once trim and neat—
In a perfect whirl
With her hurrying little feet—
That's our baby girl.

Frock all torn, gone one shoe,
Socks with mud bespattered,
Pinafore just soaking through,
Dainty toys all scattered :
Peeping 'neath a cap awry
Many a tangled curl—
What a charming little guy !
That 's our baby girl.

Tired eyes winking hard to keep
Slumber at a distance,
Gold head nodding into sleep,
Fails in its resistance :
Watching her we breathe a prayer, —
Guide her past all peril ;
Let shame not blight nor sin ensnare
Our winsome baby girl.

TO AN OLD SCHOOL FRIEND.

Too swiftly, all too swiftly, the years are flying now,
Leaving behind the trace of care on many a furrowed brow ;
But happy youth and precious health are gifts that still are thine,
Gifts that the world cannot give—gifts from a Hand divine.

The wild March wind has come again, dashing the rain like spray,
Come with the dawn to usher in thy twenty-first birthday, —
A day we oft looked forward to as school-girls in the past, —
A day oft thought and spoken of and now—has come at last.

I wish thee every happiness that Love and Peace can give ;
May Fortune shine athwart thy path as long as thou shalt live,
And earnestly I hope and trust that Friendship's golden tie
Will bind us in the years to come as in the years gone by.

MY AIN LADDIE.

Oh ! lichtsome was my heart at the trystin' 'oor yestreen
 When I met my ain dear laddie wi' the love-light in his een :
 I'd raither hae the hearty grip o' his honest, toil-worn han'
 Than bask in a' the sunny smiles o' the highest in the lan'.

What tho' he gangs ahent the ploo frae mornin's sun till e'en ?
 What tho' he be na juist sae prood as some that may be seen ?
 An honest farm lad ne'er need be ashamed to own the ploo
 Sae lang's he taks the richt frae wrang, and gi'es ilk ane his due.

Whiles in the deepenin' gloamin' grey, when ca'in' hame the kye,
 I listen for the weel-kent step I ken 'll sune come by :
 " Love lichtens labour," I hae heard—Oh ! but thae words are true,
 For glad an' lichtsome is my heart till milkin' time is through.

Then I wad steal oot frae the lave an' meet him at the stile,
 There to be welcomed wi' a kiss an' Love's ain tender smile ;
 An' there I'd hear the auld, auld tale to ilka maid sae new,
 An' weel I ken his love for me is honest, warm an' true.

Ay, an' I lo'e him weel altho' he be na worth a plack—
 I tint my heart to him langsyne—I winna seek it back ;
 An' when life's crownin' bliss is oors I'll dae my best to be
 A loyal, loving wife to him wha's a' the warl' to me.

 LOVE AND SUMMER.

Sweet summer has come back again
 Dressed in her loveliest green,
 Bright traces of her sunny smiles
 May everywhere be seen :
 The carolling lark, the frisking lamb,
 The wild bee's busy hum,
 All seem to join in one glad song,—
 " Sweet summer now has come."

Ah ! what made summer dear to me ?
 Was't only the skylark's song ?
 Was't only the smiling landscape fair
 That I had watched for long ?
 Was't the shady woods with their lovely flowers
 Set in tender, emerald hue ?
 Was it but the return of the summer-time
 That gave me life anew ?

Ah ! it was something nobler still
 That changed this heart of mine,
 As it learned to cling to another heart,
 And closely round it twine :
 Something that came to share my life,
 Constant and true to prove—
 The sweetest blessing earth can yield—
 That gem of all gems—Love.

THE TERRIBLE MEARNS FOLK.

[The people of Kincardineshire have a knack of applying the word "terrible" to circumstances of all kinds, which sounds extremely funny to a stranger; indeed, so frequently is the word used that it loses its real meaning.]

There's a canty wee coonty that lies to the sea,
 An' its foukies are couthie an' blithe as can be,
 But they've ae droll bit notion, an' 'tween you an' me
 It's "terrible."

If the simmer is bonnie, an' heartsome, an' bricht,
 They'll hae't that the heat's at a "terrible" heicht,
 Should the cauld snaw be drivin' some wild winter nicht,
 Sal, it's "terrible."

If the Schule Brod elections are peacefu' an' quate,
 Nae carousin' nor canvass, nae noisy debate,
 Then rest ye assured that as certain as Fate
 It is "terrible."

If the corn craps are heavy, an' early, an' good,
Wi' prospects o' plenty in money an' food,
Then the farmer's comment micht be misunderstood
For it's "terrible."

Gin the hairst month go by an' the grain isna in,
If corn ears be scanty an' corn sheaves be thin,
Then the farmer laments wi' his neighbours an' kin
That it's "terrible."

When word cam' oor auld Premier was gaun to resign,
The Tories grinned broadly, "That's 'terrible' fine,"
An' the Liberals groaned, "This is no a guid sign,
Fac', it's 'terrible.'"

When they kent 'twas a Scot wi' the brains o' his race
That was gaun to step into the Premier's place,
Baith parties shook hauns, an' wi' much tact an' grace
Agreed it was "terrible."

For ae thing an' a' thing the term is the same,
Serenely they reason, "Hoot! what's in a name?"
Yet I'd fain tak' their pairt for it isna their blame
A'thing's "terrible."

They've picket it up when but toddlin' bairns,
"As the auld cock craws the young ane learns,"
An' mony a great lad has sprung frae the Mearns
Spite o' "terrible."

MRS ALLAN M'DONALD

(née NELLIE J. AGNEW).

Born 1868.

NELLIE JOHNSON AGNEW was born in Glasgow on 17th October, 1868, and resided there till the death of her mother, whom she lost when a girl of ten. The family then removed to Torphichen, where Nellie attended the village school, and in her ramblings amid the delightful scenery of the neighbourhood developed that deep devotion to Nature which is such a prominent feature of all her writings in verse or prose. At the age of sixteen she returned to the city where, under the guidance and tuition of her father who is himself an artist, she acquired considerable skill in painting, and devoted herself to the cultivation and development of her literary tastes. As is usually the case, poetry had the precedence of prose in her first literary efforts, and she became a frequent contributor of verse to the columns of the *Herald*, *Scotsman*, *Mail*, *People's Journal*, and other newspapers. One of her first prose sketches, on "Angling in the Highlands," in which her talent for scenic delineation revelled amid the grandeur and beauty of West Perthshire, gained the first prize in a magazine devoted to the gentle art of old Izaak Walton. Thus encouraged her pen was freely used on this and other subjects. Five years ago Miss Agnew contributed a serial to the columns of the *West Lothian Courier* entitled "Rob

Gib's Castle: a Romance of Avonside," the scenes and incidents of which were laid in the county, and dealt with the events immediately preceding the fatal field of Flodden. The romance was very popular in the district and proved the author to be possessed of an intimate knowledge of the history and customs of that eventful time, as well as the gift of giving to her incidents that imaginative touch which is the highest art of the novelist. In 1889 Miss Agnew was married to Mr Allan M'Donald of Westfield, Torphichen. Her husband, on receiving an engineering appointment, went to India, where Mrs M'Donald also spent a year or two; but her health giving way she returned to Scotland and now resides with her two little girls at Westfield. Mrs M'Donald is a poet who has lain and been nurtured on the breast of Mother Nature from whom she drinks her sweetest inspiration, and whose heart she understands as one who has listened sympathetically to its every throb. "Mountain height and solitude, the driven and tearing rack of heaven, the far-stretching expanse of hill and moorland under the grey of the sun-streaked cloud"¹ are her soul's delight; and such themes she invests in her verse with all their awe-inspiring loftiness and grandeur, adding just that touch of womanly sympathy fitted to give them an additional charm. Mrs M'Donald is worthily included among Edwards' *Modern Scottish Poets*.

¹ *The Feeling for Nature in Scottish Poetry*: Professor Veitch--vol. ii., p. 295.

A SUMMER DREAM.

I.

With thee, I thought, I wandered on a lonely shore,
And at thy feet I dreamed one sweet June day
That earth was Paradise, and sadness mine no more,
For *thou* wert near—in thee my Heaven lay.
Sublime the mountains tower into the azure sky
Their lofty peaks—proud pinnacles of gold—
And slumbering at their base the gleaming waters lie,
Sacred and blue as Galilee of old.
Soft murm'ring o'er that sunlit sea came dreamy strains,
As if from mystic harps by angels played,
And from the ambient woodlands floated bird refrains,
With river songs among the flowers that strayed ;
But, sweeter still, within my soul thy tender tone
Lingers to thrill me more than music's stream,
And Nature's notes, on Fancy's wing to distance flown,
Fade like the mem'ry of a lovely dream.

II.

Oh ! vain, sweet dream : alas ! my fairy vision flies :
Blue heaven is mantled with a frowning cloud :
In woods that skirt fair Galilee the music dies ;
The harp's soft, dreamy strains swell wild and loud
Through sylvan bower and fairy glen ; a dirge-wind sobs
A melancholy music to the sea,
Whose solitary bosom 'neath a dark sky throbs,—
Woful thy change, oh, lonely Galilee !
The lightnings shoot their lurid tongues from peak to peak ;
The thunder's voice reverberates o'er the plain,
And, moaning bitterly, the dark blue sea waves speak,
Waking sad spirit echoes in the rain.
My golden dream is gone, and terrors o'er me sweep ;
Thy face is sad, thine eyes on heaven rest ;
Thy voice is mournful now : ah, me ! well may I weep
Big tears of anguish on the tempest's breast.

III.

Oh ! Paradise, though tempest-tossed, thou art so grand
 When sorrow dies and peace returns to thee,
 When sunbeams smile, on glist'ning tears, from cloudyland,
 And mountain mists, like nightly visions, flee.
 Oh ! birdies, sing, 'mid gleaming bowers, a harmony,
 For Galilee, my dark blue sea's at rest,
 And murmurs softly to my soul a symphony :
 Storm brings a sweeter calm into my breast.
 Hark ! o'er the sea comes wandering, tender and low,
 A music strain, a spirit song of love,
 Blending its tone with silvery streams that tinkling flow
 'Neath pearly, flow'ry gems that droop above.
 Oh ! Galilee, fair dream, dear love, fade not away,
 For at thy feet I'd linger evermore ;
 With thee behold the morning's first, the night's last ray,
 And watch the wild waves breaking on the shore.

 THE THUNDERSTORM.

BEFORE.

Quiet, oh ! so quiet ; in death's own sleep
 Nature appears entombed ;
 No sound pervades the solemn air,
 Heaven's brilliancy seems doomed.
 Clouds, motionless, like curtains drawn,
 Obscure the azure dome ;
 The noontide sun no gleam imparts
 From his celestial home.
 No zephyr stirs the woodland leaves,
 Or frets the frowning sea ;
 The soft, gray mist, like gauzy veil,
 Drapes mountain, glen, and lea.
 'Mid sheltering bowers, whose glossy leaves
 Droop sad and wearily,
 The plumaged warblers of the wood
 Cower mute and eerily.

THE STORM.

O night ! O mighty tempest ! glorious in your wrath !
Ablaze with vivid lightning mountain, sea, and strath ;
Lo ! the curtained vault of heaven, like a fiery plain,
Flashing, glowing, waning, then darkened all again.

Darker, blacker, grows the sky, fearful silence reigns ;
Hark ! upon the curtained air, from its mystic chains,
Rolls the awful thunder through the deepening gloom
Like the earthquake's shudder, or the crash of doom !

Behold ! the dull clouds sever ; down a deluge pours,
Blending with its fury mountain torrent-roars :
Woful, rustling, sighing winds, troubled, moaning sea,
Mingle with the thunder's loud roar of revelry.

AFTER.

Bright, oh ! so bright : the storm is past,
And Nature smiles once more ;
Rich music fills the fragrant air,—
The tempest's strife is o'er.

Float now o'er the blue sky's bosom
Clouds like silvery isles ;
From that radiant pavilion
The golden sunbeam smiles.

Soft breezes stir the leafy bowers
Begemmed with raindrops still ;
Rippled, the dimpled humming sea
Sings with the turbid rill.

The misty shroud of the mountain
Melts like a dream away,
While woodland minstrels loudly chant
On every gleaming spray.

AUTUMN.

Come with me in my light-built boat,
Down the stream let us slowly float,
Steering our course with gentle hand,
Eyeing with rapture the beauteous strand.
The rustling trees entwined o'erhead,
Flower and bracken and foliage dead,
Young nestlings fledged, and upward flown,
All mourn for summer dead and gone.

Golden the grain this autumn day
Gleams in its ripened majesty,
Glittering the tints of hill and vale,
Changing in hue as on we sail.
Pale yellow leaves, sere, red, and brown,
Withered and dead, fall softly down ;
The purple heath, and wildflowers gay,
Have sunk 'neath death's imperious sway.

Swallow and swift have fled away
To southern climes of brighter day,—
Grieving to gaze on faded flowers,
They sought the haunts of fresher bowers.
Saw they no beauty in yellow corn ?
In scarlet hip, or crimsoned thorn ?
Could hazel nut or forest sere
Not tempt these birds to linger here ?

Nature forbade that they should pine
O'er waning autumn's sad decline,
Or face the winds of winter drear—
The saddest time of all the year.
But soon the gladsome spring will smile,
And back once more the wanderers wile,—
Back to haunt their natal clime,
And revel in mid-summer's prime.

LULLABY.

(From "Rob Gib's Castle.")

Oh, Marion, sleep !
Night shades are falling,
And pale stars peep
From a moonless sky ;
From yonder keep
The owl is calling,
Where ivies creep
Round turrets high.

What tho' the night
Of gloom is spreading,
Happy and bright
Is thy castle hall,
Like dreamland flight
Fairy feet treading,
And soft and light
Sweet vespers fall.

Oh, Marion, rest !
Fair dawns thy morning,
Radiant and blest
Is thy flow'ry way :
O'er the gold crest
Thy brow adorning
Softly caressed
Shines cloudless day.

THE STREAMLET.

Sparkle, little streamlet, in the morning sun,
Through the bright green valleys from the hills you run,
Singing with the laverock soaring in the sky,
Trickling past the dewy flowers, o'er the stones you hie.

Flow on, little streamlet, through the sunny noon,
By the shadowy woodlands to your own sweet tune ;
Dashing quickly all the way till the sea you reach,
Flashing on the golden sands of the shining beach.

Shine on, little streamlet, afternoon is here,
Twilight shadows soft and deep now are drawing near ;
Gleam a little longer in the farewell rays,
To the glorious setting sun chanting golden lays.

LITTLE WHITE DOVE.

TO JESSIE LEONORA.

Little white dove, on my bosom rest,
Where couldst thou find so sweet a nest,
Belovèd babe, as on this fond breast,
Glowing with love for thee ?

Little white dove, in thy cradle sleep,
Thou hast no need to sigh and weep ;
Over thy slumber I vigil keep,
Singing with love to thee.

Little white dove, thou dost smile—'twould seem
Angels are flitting through thy dream ;
Or hast thou of Paradise a gleam,
Opening in love to thee ?

Little white dove, thou art fair and bright
As star of Heaven on a moonless night,
And thy soul is pure as God's own light
Shining in love o'er thee.

Little white dove, would my heart repine
If thou flit hence—no longer mine ?
Or would I to Heaven my dove resign
All in my love for thee ?

THE QUEEN OF LAKES.

Come, Donald, launch your swiftest boat,
On Lomond's lake I love to float ;
My flies are here, my rod and reel,
And ready, too, my empty creel.
Her bosom calm reflects the sky,
Inverted pine-woods, mountains high :
Paddle our skiff 'tween fairy isles
Where witching, vernal beauty smiles.

Cloudy the sky, the breeze is soft,
The cliffs sublimely frown aloft ;
Moaning, the rippling waters clear—
Surely the silvery trout lie here ?
Troll with phantom by Marrin's edge
Where roams the wild deer, grows the sedge :
Listen ! the torrents noisy pour
Down dark ravines where eagles soar.

Hark ! mountain echoes far resound,
Grouse from the moorlands whirr around :
Haste to yon bay with charming view—
Height, glen and lake of varied hue.
Row while I cast my tinselled fly,
And shadows deepen across the sky,
For ere we leave this fairy scene
I'd bank a salmon's glittering sheen.

ALEX. M. BISSET.

Born 1869.

ALEXANDER MACDONALD BISSET, the editor of the present work, was born in "the Fair City" of Perth on 5th January, 1869. The family removed to Bathgate in 1876, where, with the exception of a few years spent in Canada, Dunfermline, and Stirling, he has since lived, following the occupation of an insurance agent. In 1890 he published *Spring Blossoms: Poems and Songs* which was well received and had a ready sale. For a number of years he has contributed to the *People's Friend*, *West Lothian Courier*, *Stirling Observer*, &c., while a number of his songs have been set to music in the *National Choir*. Biographical notices of him have appeared in Edwards' *Modern Scottish Poets*, *Scottish Nights*, and Baptie's *Musical Scotland*.

HAME'S AYE HAME.¹

The sea-born breezes gaily rove
 Alang the floo'ry plains,
 An' frae the fragrant cedar grove
 The birdies lilt their strains;
 But no for me the zephyrs blaw,
 The birdies' sangs are tame,
 An' aince, aince mair I'm far awa'
 Amang the braes o' hame.

¹ Music by Alex. A. Beveridge: *National Choir*, No. 106.

Chorus—For hame's aye hame,
 Wi' a' its tender ties,
 An' roond that hallowed name
 A gowden glamour lies;
 An' tho' oor feet may wander far
 Across the saut sea-faem,
 We're Scotland's bairns whaur'er we are,
 For hame's aye hame.

I see the laverock soar to greet
 The rosy-tinted cluds;
 I hear the mavis singin' sweet
 At gloamin' in the wuds;
 My een aye seek the hameward airt,
 Far ower the weary faem,
 An' there's a langin' at my he'rt
 Aince mair to see my hame.
 For hame's aye hame, &c.

There's mony a bonnie spot on earth
 Wi' fondness I reca';
 But thou—the land that gae me birth—
 Art fairer than them a';
 An' aye 'mid distant scenes my he'rt
 Still beats to thee the same,
 For naething e'er my love can pairt
 Frae thee, my native hame.
 For hame's aye hame, &c.

THE AULD FOLK.¹

While love-lorn swains in raptured strains
 Are singin' o' their dearies,
 A nobler fire shall tune my lyre,—
 A theme that never wearies:

¹ Music by A. Stewart: *People's Friend*.

They're puir, disloyal sons o' men,
An' surely unco cauld folk,
That winna len' baith voice an' pen
In praises o' the auld folk.

The auld folk, the auld folk,
The canty, couthie auld folk ;
They ever will be dearest still,
Oor ain true-hearted auld folk.

The dearest mem'ries o' the heart
Cling roond oor faither's ingle,
Whaur voices, noo sae far apart,
Did then sae sweetly mingle.
When far awa' frae Scotland's shore
There's naething e'er enthralled folk
Like sangs they heard in days o' yore
At hame beside the auld folk.

The auld folk, the auld folk,
O leeze me on the auld folk ;
Though ither ties I dearly prize
There's nane sae dear's the auld folk.

The neebors jeer, an', bantrin', spier,
"Nae words about the wife yet?"
I haud my liberty ower dear
To change my mode o' life yet :
I hae a tosh an' tidy hame,
An' aften hae I tauld folk,
Nae lass for me need change her name—
I'm mairried to the auld folk !

The auld folk, the auld folk,
O weel I lo'e the auld folk ;
It's a' my prayer, an' a' my care
To leeve an' bless the auld folk.

THE CURLIN' O'T.¹

When Boreas keen draws tears to the een
 We carena a preen for the gurrin' o't ;
 But join in the ploys an' king o' a' joys
 That's faund 'mang the noise at the curlin' o't.
 The dirlin' o't, the whirlin' o't,
 The ringin', singin', curlin' o't ;
 It mak's me aye fain, an' music there's nane
 Like the sang o' the stane at the curlin' o't.

The craft o' the creel, the rod an' the reel,
 Is a' very weel in the twirlin' o't ;
 But fishin' is tame, an' whaur is its fame
 Compared wi' a game at the curlin' o't ?
 The dirlin' o't, the whirlin' o't, &c.

The gowfers may blaw o' pleasures they draw
 Frae their bonnie wee ba' an' the birlin' o't ;
 They're welcome, I trow, but gi'e me my "cowe"
 As my "channel-stanes" row at the curlin' o't.
 The dirlin' o't, the whirlin' o't, &c.

Nae dowiesome tid e'er fashes oor bluid,
 But blythesome an' guid is the purlin' o't ;
 As, happy an' free, wi' daffin' an' glee,
 We play to the "tee" at the curlin' o't.
 The dirlin' o't, the whirlin' o't, &c.

MY AIN LOVE LO'ES ME DEARLY.

The laverock in the simmer sky is liltin' loud an' lang :
 Sweet is the breath o' the scented brier :
 The mavis mak's sweet melody the birken boovers amang
 Whaur draps o' dew, like siller bells, in trembling beauty hang ;
 The world is fu' o' happiness, my he'rt is fu' o' sang,
 For my ain love lo'es me dearly.

¹ Music by J. C. Craig : *People's Friend*.

A kindlier smile o' lichtsome love noo beams on Nature's face—

Sweet is the breath o' the scented brier—

Within the glowin' e'e o' nicht mair tenderness I trace,

The bonnie blinkin' starnies noo shine wi' a gentler grace,

An' a' because a lassie's love within my he'rt has place,

For my ain love lo'es me dearly.

There's mirth an' music in the air, an' gladness dancin' free :

Sweet is the breath o' the scented brier :

High on the hillsides, in the dolls, an' on the dewy lea,

A bridal bed o' flooers is spread, an' ane can plainly see

The prints o' sweet wee angel feet upon the harebell wee,

For my ain love lo'es me dearly.

Oh ! love is sweet an' bonnie when twa he'rts are fond an' true—

Sweet is the breath o' the scented brier—

Ilk flooer hauds up its little cup to keep the simmer dew,

An' pledges, wi' a nod an' smile, lang happiness to you !

The birdies sing, the burnies lauch, the world o' sunshine's fu',

When your ain love lo'es ye dearly.

“THE SPIRIT OF THE LORD.”

Micah ii. 7.

The Spirit of Beauty spreads His wings

Out o'er the weary, waiting earth ;

Where'er He speeds the verdure springs,

And grace and loveliness have birth :

For winter's wild and dreary dearth

The bridal blush of spring He brings,

And in His smile with songs of mirth

Each shady grove and valley rings.

The dewdrop on the daisy's breast,

That shimmers in the eye of day ;

The splendour of the glowing west,

When day in glory melts away ;

The rainbow's semi-lucent ray ;
The blissful quietude and rest
That fill the soul at twilight grey,
His presence and His power attest.

Throughout the night's reflective hours
His iridescent love-light gleams,
And from heav'n's battlemented towers
His radiant, starry standard streams :
The moon in scintillating beams
On earth His benediction showers,
And bears the longing soul in dreams
To all the joys of Eden's bowers.

The lark, light-springing from the sod :
The waves that, murm'ring, kiss the beach ;
The fairy flowers that bloom and nod,
His omnipresent beauty preach :
In varied tongues and manners, each
Of all His works proclaims abroad
In sweet, adoring, living speech
The Spirit Beautiful of God.

SONNETS OF "THE FAIREST FAIR."

I.—MOTHER.

Mother—symbolical of all that's good,
Than which God only is a holier word—
At thy sweet name what an infinitude
Of tender memories in me is stirred.
The music of a voice in childhood heard
Falls on my ravished ear soft and subdued,
As at the eventide some distant bird
Sings sweetly in the shadow of the wood.
O loving heart that, through these thronging years,
Hast been the angel of our humble home,

To thee O never may the eye of tears
 Or the full heart of brooding sorrow come ;
 But may each kindly season that appears
 A foretaste be of God's Elysium.

II.—BEAUTY.

There is a beauty in the silent night
 When earth beneath the moon's enchantment lies,
 And all the glist'ring diamonds of the skies
 To mystic music revel in delight ;
 There is a beauty in the floweret bright
 That spreads its petals to the sun and sighs
 Its soul away in odorous ecstasies,
 Lovely in form, but lovelier in sprite ;
 There is a beauty of the mind that is—
 When o'er the soul the spell of music steals
 In whisperings of heav'n till the heart feels
 A pain in waking from the dream of bliss :
 Yea, everywhere—within us and abroad—
 Lingers the Soul of Beauty, which is God.

'MANG THE HILLS AN' THE HEATHER.

Awa' 'mang the hills an' the heather,
 Awa' frae the dinsome toon,
 Whaur the lark sings high in the simmer sky
 An' the burn comes dancin' doon :
 The burn comes dancin' doon,
 An' the daisy blinks frae the sod,
 An' the breeze that plays ower the broomy braes
 Is the very breath o' God.
 Some wander wide through the woodlands,
 An' some by the side o' the sea ;
 But the mountains grand o' my native land—
 The hills, the hills for me.

There's joy 'mang the hills an' the heather,
An' a beauty that ne'er can tire ;
There are stories stern in each rugged cairn
That set the he'rt on fire—
They set the he'rt on fire
Wi' thochts that are 'maist divine,
An' oor bosoms swell 'neath the magic spell
O' the mem'ries o' langsyne.
Oh ! the valleys are bricht an' bonnie,
An' sweet is the gowany lea ;
But the mountains grand o' my native land—
The hills, the hills for me.

Awa' 'mang the hills an' the heather,
Whaur the tyrant's foot ne'er trod,
An' the men that bide on the mountain side
Ne'er bent the knee but to God—
Ne'er bent the knee but to God,
For the flag o' the free floats there,
Wi' its lion bold on the shield o' gold,
An' its motto, "Touch wha dare !"
I lo'e na the southern zephyrs,
But the grish o' the nor' wind free ;
An' the mountains grand o' my native land—
The hills, the hills for me.

JAMES SAMUEL.

Born 1869.

JAMES SAMUEL was born at Bathgate on the 1st of June, 1869. He received his education at the Bathgate Academy, after which he served his apprenticeship to the tailoring trade. Proceeding to London he qualified himself for a cutter, and spent a few months at Bonnyrigg in this capacity, when he transferred his services to the Co-operative Society of his native town, where he has since resided. He has been a frequent contributor of verse to the *West Lothian Courier*, *Christian News*, and elsewhere during the last ten years, and locally is held in high regard as a poet. The sublime and beautiful in nature have been the themes on which he has chiefly exercised his poetic talent, and these he treats very sympathetically. His poems are all marked by finely conceived and lofty thought expressed in graceful language, though the too frequent use of

“Apt alliteration’s artful aid”

is occasionally a redundant harmony to the sensitive ear, and, by inducing it to follow rather the sound of the words than the sense of the poem, detracts somewhat from the otherwise well-sustained and finished efforts of his reflective muse. These have not yet been issued in a collected form; but should the author do so they will, unquestionably, be no mean contribution to the poetic literature of the county.

FANCY'S FORMS.

In the days when superstitions
Reigned with universal power,
Men believed in apparitions
Walking at the midnight hour.

And although the "king of reason"
Has secured the crown since then,
Secret forms of ancient treason
Linger in the hearts of men.

There are instincts, still unbroken,
Rampant in the human heart,
Craving for substantial token
Of the spirit's hidden part.

And responsive to their pleading
For the pleasures which they love,
Under wand'ring Fancy's leading
Sober minds are charmed to rove.

While, to poets idly dreaming,
Thoughts like these are ready themes;
For the air with spirits teeming
To unfettered Fancy seems.

At the silent hour of midnight
Forth come airy, phantom hosts,
From the shadows of the moonlight,
From the palaces of ghosts :

From broad rivers, slowly gliding
From their distant ocean home ;
From the fleet-winged breezes, riding
On the billows crowned with foam :

From the dark wood's deep recesses,
From the parted lips of flowers ;
From the cornfield's waving tresses,
From the mountain's lofty towers :

From the merry sunbeams hiding
In the white cloud's snowy caves,
Where the upper currents, gliding,
Fondly rest their gentle waves.

Oh ! thou subtle, self-eluding,
Ever-seeking soul of man,
Striving still—with hope deluding—
Thine essential form to scan.

Thou 'rt a spirit, and beholding
Nature's mirror, thou dost view
Every grace and flaw unfolding
To thy inmost image true.

And the thought that earth rejoices
From thy depths of joy has sprung ;
Nature's strange, mysterious voices
Echo from thy mystic tongue :

And their tale is full of sadness
When thy heart recounts its woes,
And their song is filled with gladness
When thy heart with mirth o'erflows.

WARBLE, YE WILD BIRDS.¹

Warble, ye wild birds that dwell where the shadows
Sleep while the sunbeams are lighting the land ;
Sacred your temple above the green meadows,
Shrine of deep silence, majestic and grand.

Th' pine trees its pillars, whose broad boughs are bearing
Banners that gleam in the glory of day :
Triumphs of summer each leaf is declaring
To sweet-scented zephyrs that glide on their way.

¹ Music by J. S. Cairns : *National Choir*, No. 89.

Eloquent priests of the voiceless creation,
 Praising and pleading with fervent desire ;
 Morn, noon, and evening, in rapt adoration,
 Burn thy sweet offering on love's glowing fire.

Oh ! for a home in the heart of thy dwelling,
 Safety from sorrow my soul would implore ;
 Then the rude passions within my breast swelling,
 Sobbing, might slumber to wake nevermore.

SNOW.

The snow hath wreathed the mountain side,
 And draped the silent wood ;
 And o'er the river, long and wide,
 Where sunny sails in summer glide,
 Hath whispered solitude.

Sown seed, soft showers, and summer sun,
 The eager earth instilled ;
 And now—her loving labours done,
 And stores of golden treasure won—
 With holy peace is filled.

Over her sleeping form is spread
 A white robe from the sky :
 'Tis not a shroud that wraps the dead,
 But spotless draping, on the bed
 Of virgin purity.

A SABBATH MORNING IN OCTOBER.

Before the blast the gloomy clouds are sailing,
 And o'er the land descends their drenching spray ;
 O'er yonder hill the mist's grey robes are trailing,
 While nature's tears obscure the eye of day.

The wayside beech, before the tempest bending,
 Resigns her autumn robe of richest brown ;
 Her whirling leaves to desolation lending
 A woe unfelt beneath his darkest frown.

The sombre firs, with dark green banners swinging,
Undaunted stand in soldierly array ;
While through their boughs the flying gale is singing
A chorus caught from wild seas far away.

But hark ! the bells—the storm's dark omens spurning—
Proclaiming joy for every soul to-day ;
So, from the clouded light of nature turning,
We 'll greet that Light of pure celestial ray.

NIGHT.

The weary day, with all its tears,
Now nestles 'neath the wings of night,
And all its preying cares and fears
Have vanished with the light.

Over the sad, world-weary soul
The deep, sweet peace of heav'n has pass'd,
As when a calm succeeds the howl
Of summer's fitful blast.

With silent steps the faithful stars
Their watchful stations reassume,
And holy thoughts break through the bars
Of soul-pervading gloom :

While flickering faith, with heav'n-drawn strength,
Sways her sweet sceptre o'er the soul,
Until in glory's fields at length
The notes of triumph roll.

HEART OF YOUTH.

Heart of youth, with life abounding,
Throbbing full in conscious strength,
Purest depths of pleasure sounding,
Leaping laughter's utmost length ;

Swift through every vein and tissue
Sweeps the vital, teeming tide ;
Streams of song, o'erflowing, issue
From the flood-gates, opened wide.

Refrain.—Ever beat in unison
With the ever-loving One ;
With earth's great fraternity
Ever throb in harmony.

Heart of youth, in hope delighting,
Fearless still of Fortune's frown ;
Gloomy paths of future lighting,
Treading Doubt's dark turrets down :
Pressing on, nor asking, Whither
Is the end and high reward ?—
Sure, the Hand that helped us hither
Shall our future journeys guard.

Heart of youth, with love o'erflowing,
Gushing full in honest pride ;
With the fire of fervour glowing,
Beaming joy on every side ;
Till beneath its kindly billow
Sink the swords of shameful strife,
And o'er friendship's mutual pillow
Sheds the sweet repose of life.

Heart of youth, to manhood marching,
Dazzled by the deeds of old ;
Fancy's flowery wreaths o'erarching
Pleasant paths of gleaming gold :
Paths that lead to heights of glory,
Temples of eternal fame,
Where the gods, enshrined in story,
Sculptured an immortal name.

RICHARD AITKEN GLASS.

Born 1874.

RICHARD AITKEN GLASS, better known by his *nom-de-plume* of "Roderick," was born in Linlithgow on the 14th of January, 1874. On leaving school at the age of thirteen he was apprenticed to the painting trade, which occupation he has since followed. He is at present residing at Grangemouth where he has been employed since the spring of last year. During the last few years he has been a frequent contributor to the poetical columns of the *People's Journal*, *Dundee Weekly News*, and the various local newspapers. Though quite a young man yet Mr Glass has written some very meritorious productions, and as one of the rising county poets he will, in the near future, doubtless, essay higher themes of song than he has hitherto attempted. His verse is free and melodious, and has the evident stamp of sincerity which, if conjoined with poetical merit, never fails to secure an appreciative circle of readers. Mr Glass has always taken a warm practical interest in temperance and other social reforms, and is highly respected for his genial and kindly disposition.

THE TWA ROSES.

Twa roses grew by the burnie's side,
An' oh, they were fair to see,
As they nodded in their simmer pride
To the burnie as it fast did glide
Wi' a lightsome sang o' glee.

The ane was a flooer o' brichtest hue,
 The ither was white as snaw,
 An' aye the closer at nicht they drew
 To kep thegither the sparklin' dew
 As the gloamin' shades wad fa'.

The roses are faded noo an' gane
 That bloomed sae bonnie an' fair ;
 The burnie, that roon' ilk mossy stane
 Gaed singin' a blythe an' lightsome strain,
 Is drumlie an' sings nae mair.

But its sang is re-echoed in my heart,
 An' the incense o' peace is given,
 When the settin' sunrays cease to dart,
 An' the stars in the lift their blinkin' start,
 As I seek the blessin' o' heaven.

MEMORY.

What cherished idol fair to view,
 Thus ever changing, ever new,
 Is to my heart more dear
 Than thee, my mirror of the past,
 Where oft the image hath been cast
 Of scenes I still revere ?
 Where I can view each merry ploy
 I fain would live again,
 When I, a free unfettered boy,
 Would ramble through the glen,
 And sporting, resorting
 To many a shady nook,
 To wander and ponder
 O'er Nature's open book.

Oh, Memory ! to thee I cling
 When Hope on high exultant wing
 Doth calm and smoothly glide ;
 When clouds of dull despair look bleak
 To thee I turn once more to seek
 The solace ye provide.

Companion of my leisure hour !
When naught disturbs, thou art
The owner of a mystic power
That ruleth in my heart ;
Where reigning, constraining
The emotions of the soul,
The sobbing and throbbing
Are under thy control.

What lessons can from thee be got,
For sad experience, dearly bought,
Is graven deep on thee,
And scenes I view with sad regret,
And vainly wish I could forget
And nevermore should see :
But thou art stern and wilt not move
Those sad scenes from my view, —
All shattered hopes and blighted love
Can still be found with you ;
You keep them and heap them
Where they are plainly seen,
Then hasten to chasten
And show what might have been.

Oh, Memory ! I would not hide
The visions that with thee abide,
Nor cast into the shade
The sadder portions of thy scene,
For all the brightness of thy mien
Would quick and surely fade.
Stern Fate may rob me of my all,
Or take my dearest friend,
Yet still I can from thee recall
Their memories to attend,
To cheer me and steer me
Along Life's rugged road ;
To brighten and lighten
My heavy cumbrous load.

COCKLERORY.

Bold Cockleroy, thy lordly brow
 Looks o'er the beauteous vale beneath ;
 Thy swarthy shoulders are, I trow,
 Clothed with the ruby-tinted heath,
 And in the leafy woods around,
 Where oft I wandered when a boy,
 There Nature's emeralds abound
 To deck thy robes, fair Cockleroy.

Oft would our childish voices break
 The stillness of thy solitude ;
 Our merry laughter oft would wake
 The echoes of each rock and wood—
 Echoes that in the days of yore
 Resounded with a peal of joy
 When the royal hunter's bugle o'er
 Thy hills did sound, fair Cockleroy.

I loved in boyhood's happy days
 Up to thy summit high to climb,
 And there to rest awhile and gaze
 On Nature's face, fair and sublime,
 Until my youthful heart would swell
 With rapture that scarce knew alloy,
 And with a thoughtful mind I'd dwell
 Upon thy scenes, fair Cockleroy.

And when a happy country swain
 I yielded first to Cupid's power,
 And tasted love devoid of pain
 With Annie in thy sylvan bower ;
 The fairest gems of Nature's art
 To twine a wreath I did employ,
 And crowned her sovereign of my heart
 In thy seclusion, Cockleroy.

But, farewell, monarch of the vale,
 Stern duty's call must be obeyed ;
 Tho' up thy sides no more I scale
 Thy memory shall never fade,
 For in my heart there still shall be
 Remembrance of each merry ploy
 That I with loved ones played near thee,—
 So, fare-thee-well, fair Cockleroy.

MARION OF THE MILL.

I wandered forth at gloaming grey
 Where Avon's waters swiftly glide,
 Around, the leaves all dying lay—
 Last relics of the summer's pride :
 And all around was calm and still
 Save for the crashing of the mill.

When, stealing through the twilight air,
 A gentle voice came sweet and clear,
 Awaking echoes everywhere,—
 I listened anxiously to hear
 The music sweet that made me thrill
 With love for Marion of the Mill.

A girlish form, yet full of grace,
 Her honeyed lips of cherry red,
 A smooth white brow and fair sweet face,
 With snowy neck and stately head :
 Fit subject for an artist's skill
 Is charming Marion of the Mill.

Her dark brown locks of silken sheen,
 Her glistening eye of hazel hue,
 Soft dimpled cheek and modest mien,—
 Such was the form that met my view
 That night when wandering at will
 I met fair Marion of the Mill.

Oh, brighter than the sparkling pearl
The dewdrop shines on daisy fair,
And sweet the song of beauteous merle
That charms the dewy twilight air ;
Yet sweeter, brighter, fairer still
Is charming Marion of the Mill.

Ye angels in your high domain,
Guards of the innocent and pure,
Watch her, and keep her free from stain
When fierce temptation's storms endure,
And lead her safely through all ill,
My charming Marion of the Mill.

LUNA.

The moon beams o'er the solitude
Of mountain, glen and plain,
And o'er the dark and sombre wood
Where leaves the silver rays exclude,
And hallowed peace doth reign.

It shines across the tossing deep,
And on the white wave's crest,
And o'er the town a watch doth keep
Where honest sons of labour sleep
In sweet and tranquil rest.

When Nature dons the robes of night,
And daylight fades away,
When the pale vigil's pensive light
To soothing sleep and rest invite
The toilers of the day :

Then to this weary heart of mine
A gleam of hope is given ;
Fear is dispelled where it doth shine ;
It fills my soul with love divine,
And draws me nearer heaven.

JESSIE B. T. WEIR.

Born 1881.

A PERUSAL of the following poems from the pen of one so young in years will, we are assured, amply justify her inclusion among the poets of the county, and render any apologetic introduction unnecessary. Jessie Barr Thomson Weir was born at Longridge on October 11th, 1881, and attended the village school before she was four years old. To Mr Stevenson of Longridge Public School, who took a deep interest in aiding and directing the studies of his apt pupil, Miss Weir attributes much of the success which has attended her various examinations. In 1893 she obtained a £4 bursary tenable for three years, and in the following year was the successful competitor for a bursary of £15 tenable for the same period. This induced her to enter the Free Church Normal School at Moray House, Edinburgh, where she is at present pursuing her studies under the direction of Mr Dawson. Last year (1895) she gained Lower Grade Leaving Certificates in English, French and Mathematics. The sudden death of her mother in February 1893 was a very severe loss. Miss Weir has been a contributor to the Poet's Corner of the *West Lothian Courier* for three years, so that it may well be said of her that she "lisp'd in numbers for the numbers came." Her poems evince the true poet's worshipful love for all the emotions which make themselves visible on the fair face of Nature; and reveal a thoughtful, reflective mind. They are remarkably free from the crudities and imperfections

which one naturally expects to find in the verses of a girl of fourteen, and give reason to hope that the beauty of the bud will yet be excelled by the fragrant loveliness of the flower.

REFLECTIONS IN THE GLOAMING.

Far in the west the sun has set,
And over all the sky
A glorious radiance lingers yet,
Delightful to the eye.

Wistfully on the scene I gaze,
Within, my heart is sad
As I think of the merry, livelong days
When everything was glad.

These now are past, and never will
To me return again :
My eyes with tears begin to fill
To muse on childhood then.

My thoughts stray back to haunts I love,
And think how they will look
When those gorgeous tints stream from above,
And light up every nook.

In fancy again those scenes I see,
And the peewit's lonely cry
To-night in my dream comes back to me
As if he were darting by.

But now the shadows grey and deep
Come slowly creeping on ;
The stars begin their watch to keep,
The last faint rays are gone.

No silence here—no hushed repose
Leads in the welcome night,
For the hum of city life still flows
'Mid every varying light.

But list ! a voice I loved to hear
Sounds faintly in the air,
And bids me hope and never fear
But try to join her there.

And now new courage comes to me
To battle till that dawn,
And this my watchword aye shall be,
“ Look upwards—always on.”

MOONLIGHT.

Shine, bonnie moon, give forth thy silver light,
And brighten up the darkness of the night :

The sun has fled,
And thou dost shed

Thy glistening rays o'er land and sea—
Those rays so clear, and full, and free.

The twinkling stars come out in glittering sheen,
And light the pathway for their gentle queen,

And in the west
The clouds are dressed

In tinges of pink and amber hue
Which, fading fast, melt into blue.

Now wrapped in mystic light are vale and hill ;
While the sweet waters of the tinkling rill

In plaintive song
Their notes prolong,

And nature lends a listening ear
To hear the music soft and clear.

The birds have sung their evening song, and all
Are now at rest among the green trees tall

Or lowly grass,
Where, as I pass,

The light makes shadows on the ground,
And silence reigns on all around.

As fleeting as those shadows are my dreams,
And musings and reflections, for it seems
 That in the light
 The dreams of night,
Like passing of the summer wind,
Vanish and leave no trace behind.

A LIFE'S STORY.

I saw a little boy one day
Run here and there in childish play ;
Unto myself then did I say,
 " This surely is the Spring
Of childhood, compassed round with love,
Fanned by soft breezes from above,
Happier than a spicy grove
 Where sweetest echoes ring."
As he grew up in him I saw
A man to whom God's word was law,
In whom 'twas hard to find a flaw :
 In musing mood, thought I,
" This must be gladsome Summer, fraught
With fragrance by soft breezes brought
From flowers more fair than could be got
 Beneath a Southern sky."

I saw again an aged man
For whom this life's predestined span
Swift to a happy ending ran :
 " He to maturity
Is very nigh," thought I, " and soon,
'Neath the clear rays of the harvest moon,
He'll welcome the sickle of Death as a boon
 To reveal futurity."

Once more--round a hushed and silent bed
Tears of sorrow were vainly shed
For him whose noble spirit had fled
 To be with Christ for ever ;

Yet still this thought consoled their grief,
And they rejoiced in this belief
That they 'd meet again beyond Death's reef,
Just across the river.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF JANET THOMSON MARTIN,

Who died 1st December, 1894.

The year is dead : a sighing wind
Among the trees is moaning ;
The branches bare and leafless
At every gust are groaning.

The dark and dreary landscape now
In mournful gloom is wrapped ;
But hush ! for with the dying year
A life's short thread has snapped.

'Twas one whose spotless purity
Was whiter than the snow,
Whose stainless soul could equal
The marble of her brow.

That fragile flower was never meant
To brave life's storm and blast,
And, after blooming here a while,
She was taken home at last.

Oh, moan ! ye sighing winds,
But ye cannot bring her back ;
Ye cannot bring to us again
The treasure now we lack.

Oh, groan ! ye creaking branches,
But no—she cannot hear,
For lifeless is the cold clay now.
And deaf and dull her ear.

Slowly and sadly with the year
She sank into the grave,
No murmuring plaint upon her lips,
For she was calm and brave.

And with fleeting breath she whispered,
"Take me, Jesus, I am Thine;"
For well she knew that after death
Her soul would in glory shine.

AT THE DAWNING.

'Tis early morn—the grass is wet
With drops of dew that glitter yet
On blades and leaves of em'rald green ;
Now in the east the dawning breaks,
And lights the sky with silver streaks,
And everything in glimm'ring sheen.

The silver daisy from its bed
Begins to raise its dewy head,
And birds upon the treetops high
Commence to warble forth their praise,
And carol all their sweetest lays,
That rise like incense to the sky.

Now steal the sun's rays o'er the lea
To waken up bright songsters free,
And raise the lily's drooping head ;
Then o'er the moorland wastes they go
Where noisy, bounding streamlets flow,
And sweetly kiss the heather red.

High up the rocks, the tow'ring heights,
With rosy hues each sunbeam lights,
Till lowly vale and snowcapped hill
Are bathed in sunlight, bright and free,
Which streams on every flower and tree,
And glances in each tinkling rill.

Ah, flow'rets ! my companions sweet,
I would not trample 'neath my feet
Your spotless beauty in the glen :
But now, farewell ! I must away ;
Rest comes with night, but toil with day,—
Farewell ! fair flowers—I'll come again.

MISCELLANEOUS SONGS AND BALLADS.

THE ROCK AND THE WEE PICKLE TOW; OR, LORD LITHGOW'S MARCH.

THIS tune is, and has been for several centuries, the march of Linlithgow Burgh.



ALEXANDER ROSS (1699-1784) wrote a humorous song to this air which he appended to his pastoral, *Helenore; or the Fortunate Shepherdess*, published in 1768; but, as it extends to nineteen verses of eight lines each, it is too lengthy for insertion.

Another song to the same air appears anonymously in Whitelaw's *Book of Scottish Song*, p. 293.

The following abridged version of Ross's song, it is believed by himself, is taken from Herd's Collection, 1776.

THE ROCK AND THE WEE PICKLE TOW.

There was an auld wife had a wee pickle tow,
And she wad gae try the spinnin' o't;
She louted her doun and her rock took a-lowe,
And that was a bad beginnin' o't.

She sat and she grat, and she flat and she flang,
And she threw and she blew, and she wriggled and wrang,
And she chokit and boakit, and cried like to mang,
Alas, for the dreary beginnin' o't !

I've wantit a sark for these aught years and ten,
And this was to be the beginnin' o't ;
But I vow I shall want it for as lang again
Or ever I try the spinnin' o't :
For never since ever they ca'd as they ca' me,
Did sic a mishap and mischanter befa' me,
But ye shall hae leave baith to hang and to draw me
The neist time I try the spinnin' o't.

I hae keepit my house now these threescore years,
And aye I kept frae the spinnin' o't ;
But how I was sarkit, foul fa' them that spiers,
For it minds me upo' the beginnin' o't.
But our women are now-a-days a' grown sae braw
That ilk ane maun hae a sark, and some hae twa—
The warlds were better where ne'er ane ava
Had a rag, but ane at the beginnin' o't.

But we maun hae linen, and that maun hae we,
And how get we that but by spinnin' o't ?
How can we hae face for to seek a great fee
Except we can help at the winnin' o't ?
And we maun hae pearlins, and mabbies, and cloaks,
And some other things that the ladies ca' smocks,
And how get we that gin we tak' na our rocks,
And pow what we can at the spinnin' o't ?

'Tis needless for us to mak' our remarks,
Frae our mither's miscookin' the spinnin' o't ;
She never kenn'd ocht o' the gued o' the sarks,
Frae this aback to the beginnin' o't.
Twa-three ell o' plaiden was a' that was socht
By our auld-warld bodies, and that bude be bocht ;
For in ilka toon siccan things wasna wrocht,
Sae little they kenn'd o' the spinnin' o't.

A SPEECH AT THE KING'S ENTRY INTO THE
TOWN OF LINLITHGOW.

Pronounced by Mr James Wiseman, schoolmaster there, enclosed in a plaster
made in the figure of a Lion.

WILLIAM DRUMMOND OF HAWTHORNDEN (1585-1649).

Thrice royal sir, here I do you beseech,
Who art a lion, to hear a lion's speech ;
A miracle ; for since the days of Æsop,
No lion till those times his voice dar'd raise up
To such a majesty. Then, king of men,
The king of beasts speaks to thee from his den ;
Who, though he now enclosed be in plaster,
When he was free was Lithgow's *wise* schoolmaster.

THE LASS O' LIVINGSTON.

THE air of this name is inserted in the MS. music-book of Mrs Crockat which bears the date 1709 ; but, in all probability, it is fully a century older ; for Ramsay, who was born in 1684, gives it as an ancient tune. Ramsay wrote new verses to it which were published in his *Tea-Table Miscellany* in 1724, and afterwards appeared with the music in the *Orpheus Caledonius* in 1725. Ramsay's version begins,—

Pained with her slighting Jamie's love,
Bell dropt a tear—Bell dropt a tear ;
The gods descended from above,
Well pleased to hear—well pleased to hear.

Altogether it is a very strained, unnatural production with little to recommend it. Of the original song Burns, in his *Remarks on Scottish Songs*, says, "The old song, in three eight-line stanzas, is well known, and has merit as to wit and humour, but is rather unfit for insertion." It begins thus—

The bonnie lass o' Livi'ston,
Her name ye ken, her name ye ken ;
And she has written in her contract
To lie her lane, to lie her lane.
 &c., &c., &c.

Lady Nairne has a very fine Jacobite song under this title which is well worth reproduction.

THE LASS OF LIVINGSTONE.

Oh ! wha will dry the dreepin' tear
She sheds her lane, she sheds her lane ?
Or wha the bonnie lass will cheer
Of Livingstone, of Livingstone ?
The croun was half on Charlie's head
Ae gladsome day, ae gladsome day ;
The lads that shouted joy to him
Are in the clay, are in the clay.

Her waddin' gown was wyl'd and won,
It ne'er was on, it ne'er was on :
Culloden field, his lowly bed,
She thought upon, she thought upon.
The bloom has faded frae her cheek
In youthfu' prime, in youthfu' prime ;
And sorrow's with'ring has done
The deed o' time, the deed o' time.

It was to this air that Burns wrote his exquisite song,
O wert thou in the cauld blast, which has since been wedded
to the equally beautiful composition of Mendelssohn.

The following version of *The Bonnie Lass of Livingstone* is
by James Jaap (1792-1860), author of *The Woods of
Dunmore*, and many other charming lyrics. He afterwards
substituted "Haddington" for "Livingstone."

A bonnier lass there never was,
The sun ne'er shone the like upon ;
She's fair and sweet, neat and complete—
The bonnie lass of Livingstone.

And in her face there shines sic grace,
Her smile's sae sweet to look upon ;
Sae fair's the lass nane can surpass
The bonnie lass of Livingstone.

When night comes near, and all is drear,
My fancy roams on her alone ;
She is the light that cheers the night—
The bonnie lass of Livingstone.

My every prayer, my every care,
My every thought I think upon,
'Tis, were she mine, this maid divine—
The bonnie lass of Livingstone.

LEGEND OF THE HOUND POINT OF BARNBOUGLE.

THIS fine ballad, by the late WILLIAM WALLACE FYFE, for a number of years editor of the *North British Agriculturist*, appears in his *Life on Land and Water at South Queensferry*, where the author ingeniously tells us "a legend of the house of Barn or Baron-bugle represents that whenever the death of any of its lords is about to occur, the apparition of a black man, accompanied by a hound, appears upon the point, and winds from his *bugle* the death-note of the *baron*." In *The Abbot*, chap. xx., Scott makes reference to "the Gothic towers of Barnbougles, rising from the sea-beaten rock, and overlooking one of the most glorious landscapes in Scotland."

Sir Roger is gone to the wars I trow,
 To fight for the Holy Tree—
 A Red-Cross Knight in a garb of white,
 And mail of the metal free.
 And he has sworn by the Temple Arch,
 And the mystic fingers five,
 To whet his blade on the Soldan's head
 Or ne'er return alive.

He left no loving dame behind
 When he sailed for the Paynim strand :
 And he built his keep by the waters deep,
 But not for lack of land.
 He kissed his crosier-hilted sword,
 And he kneeled in Dalmeny fane,
 And prayed for the good of the brotherhood
 Till he came back again.

Sir Roger he thought no loving eye
 Would drop him a parting tear :
 To the point he strode where his shallop rode,
 And his wistful hound stood near.
 The dog looked up in his master's face
 And uttered a dismal howl—
 A piteous cry that rent the sky,
 But softened the Templar's soul.

“My faithful brach !” quoth the Red-Cross Knight,
 “We never shall part, I swear,
 While the Mowbray's hand can lift a brand.
 It boots not when or where.”
 The twain leapt lightly to the deck—
 The Templar and the hound ;
 The cord was cast, and the shallop passed
 The welkin's farthest bound.

Long, long had the mail-clad Templar fought
 Beneath the blood-red cross,
 Where many a knight was slain in fight
 With none to mourn his loss :

At length through the keep by the waters deep
 There thrilled a bugle sound—
 A death-wail passed on the midnight blast
 Where Sir Roger met the hound.

And a darksome Paynim form appeared
 Winding that solemn wail—
 In the ebbing tide, a hound by his side,
 But neither shallop nor sail :
 And ever when Barnbogle's Lords
 Are parting this scene below
 Come hound and ghost to that haunted coast,
 And death-notes winding slow.

NANCY DAWSON.

THIS humorous ballad we took down from the recitation of an old lady in Slamannan some seven years ago. She had learned it from the singing of her old master fifty years previously, while a herd lassie in the parish of Torphichen. Whether or not the scene of the ballad is laid in Linlithgowshire we cannot decide ; but the fact that it has not hitherto appeared in any collection, so far as we can ascertain, is a sufficient plea for its preservation here. Occasionally the reciter's memory failed her, and we have been compelled to supply these omissions in order to preserve the continuity of the narrative. Our own lines are placed within brackets ; but, if such can be had, we should be glad to obtain a complete copy. The ballad evidently belongs to the earlier half of last century, and in all likelihood is a faithful description of an incident of that time.

We have in our possession an old song-sheet with an operatic version of *Nancy Dawson : a Favourite Song, with*

Harpsichord Accompaniment, which, as it contains a thinly-veiled reference to Garrick as "little Davy," is evidently of date about 1760. It is there set to rather a taking air, and has four stanzas of which the first and best, presumably referring to some operatic star of the period, is as follows:—

Of all the Girls in our Town,
The Black, the Fair, the Red, the Brown,
That Prance and Dance it up and down,
There's none like Nancy Dawson.
Her easy Mein, her Shape so neat,
She Foots, she trips, she looks so sweet,
Her very motions are compleat,
I die for Nancy Dawson.

When the late Alexander Hamilton published his series of *Songs and Ballads* in the *Courier* during the winter of 1888-89 we published this as an appendix to the number. The old lady sang it to the air of *The Couldrife Wooer*.

There was a lass leaved in yon glen
Baith auld an' young did brawly ken,
She crackit the he'rts o' a' the men,
Her name was Nancy Dawson ;
But her auld daddie ne'er could bear
That ony ane her price should spier,
Except the laird o' muckle gear,
Blythe whustlin' Bauldy Lawson.

But Rab was young an' Rab was braw,
He had a tongue ayont them a'
Could wile the egg frae 'neath the craw,
He was the lassie's fancy ;
But Rab had neither gear nor lan',
Sae couldna please the auld guidman,
It gar't the carle to rage an' ban,
"The loon'll ne'er get Nancy."

The faither fleeced, the mither flate,
 They baulthered the lass baith ear' an' late
 To wed the laird for his braw estate
 Or she wad get nae tocher ;
 But she in Glesca toon did ca',
 An' was advised by the limb o' the law
 To please hersel' afore them a',
 As she was an only dochter.

The match was settled, banns were ca'd,
 The braws were bocht wi' great parad',
 Then Bauldy he fu' croosely crawled
 Ower a' the lads victorious.
 At length the bridal day cam' roun',
 The gossips met wi' gleesome soun',
 But hope turned disappointment sune —
 Hech ! we see na far afore us.

Wi' poother'd wig arrived the priest,
 The brewer an' his lade cam' neist,
 The baker brang a special feast
 O' roast pies, buns, an' gravy.
 The cry gat up, "The bridegroom's comin' !"
 Baith auld an' young did oot get runnin',
 An' there they heard the fiddle bummin',
 An' liltin' *Dainty Davie*.

The bride's noo left i' the spence her lane,
 An' oot at the back door she has gane,
 An' thro' the yaird, an' doon the glen
 Among the birks an' hazels :
 She ran straucht to the trystin' tree
 An' met wi' Rab wi' muckle glee,
 An' they hae fled across the lea
 As licht as hares or weasels.

[The bridegroom he was buskt fu' gran'
 Wi' poother'd wig an' linen ban'
 An' at his side the blythe best man
 Wi' owerlay white as snaw.]

They were welcomed ben wi' muckle mense
To see the bride within the spence,
But they were bereft o' a' their sense
When they saw she was awa' !

They socht her oot, they socht her in,
But on the track they ne'er could win,
Some hintit leukin' roun' the linn,—
Hysteries seized the auld carline.
But Tam the herd's come doon the dale,
Blythe herald o' a dolefu' tale,
Quo' he, "I saw her blythe an' hale
Scourin' aff wi' Rab Macfarlane."

[Thinkin' in vain the lass he'd wooed,
Puir Bauldy ran as hard 's he could,]
Put on his specs, the hill he viewed
An' saw them turn the cairn ;
He cried to the best man, " Roger, rin !
As yet we're no that far ahin',
For thou to me a wife may win
An' save the laird's dear bairn."

The fiddler, neither stiff nor slack,
Ran till his legs were like to crack ;
He fell on his broo an' his bow he brak',
An' can' hame wi' a bluidin' nose !
[The puir bridegroom was wae to see,
For spaired a' ower wi' glaur was he,
Frae tap to tae, frae white e'e-bree
Doon to his silken hose.

But though a' ran wi' micht an' main
Their pith an' pooer were'spent in vain,
The soople lovers ne'er were ta'en,
But had escaped them clean ;
Syne Roger, seein't a hopeless case,
A' oot o' win' ga'e up the chase,]
For ilka ane believed the race
Wad end at Greta Green.

But wha's to eat the feast sae fat?
 An' wha's to quaff the brews o' maut?
 For Bauldy has nae taste for that
 Sin' Nancy's proved na sterlin'.
 They a' slade aff like knotless threids
 To lay aside their bridal weeds,
 Sayin', "The morn we'll rise wi' braw haleheids,
 An' be thankin' Rab Macfarlane."

Ye wha hae dochters a' tak' tent,
 An' prudence learn frae this event,
 Ne'er bargain them 'gainst their consent
 Although it be the fashion,
 Lest on their blythesome bridal day
 They oot the back door chance to stray,
 An' lichtly skip across the lea
 Like charming Nancy Dawson.

BARBAUHLAW BURN.

THE following poem is from the pen of THOMAS SHARP, Westport, New Zealand, a native of Armadale. It appeared some ten years ago in the *Courier*, and afterwards in the *Poetry of the Dell*.

Far away, but not unmindful of the dear familiar place
 Where I passed my days of childhood, mem'ry lingers still to trace
 Every nook with fond exactness, and my heart-felt longings turn
 In affectionate remembrance unto thee, Barbauchlaw Burn.

Though we're parted now by oceans, I can think of happy hours
 Passed upon thy banks, dear streamlet, among sweetly-scented
 flowers,
 Growing in such chaste luxuriance, fringing thy waters' side,
 In flowery innocence resembling Eden in its pride.

There the laverock carolled welcome to the bursting forth of day,
 From the wild-rose bush the linnet sang his mellifluous lay;
 The burn ran on in gladness, all Nature seemed so proud,
 In the glen fresh choristers awoke and joined the singing crowd.

The mavis, so enchanting, trilled his sweetest minstrelsy,
And the blackbird's freshest warblings joined the ever-swelling
glee ;

The song still echoes in my ear, the music in its flow
Seems just as fresh and sweet as when I heard it long ago.

All the summer charms of Nature could not woo thee from thy way,
All the sweetest lilt of songbirds were in vain—you would not stay ;
As you passed them cowslips nodded in the joyous smiling sun ;
But you would not pause a moment, but kept ever hurrying on.

And when surly winter's floods were loosed and madly swelled thy
force
Into a muddy torrent, carrying all things in thy course,
You passed the bridge above the mill as if in fiendish glee—
How changed since summer—on you swept until you reached the
sea.

The Thames, the Tyne and Mersey, the Humber, Tees and Wear,
The Clyde and Tweed, the Tay and Don, and Robbie Burns's Ayr,
Have all been sung in stately song, but this my theme shall be,—
Barbauchlaw Burn, in a' the world the bonniest place to me.

CARRIBBER GLEN.

THIS poem on Carribber or Rab Gib's Glen, one of the most charming bits of scenery in the county, appeared in the *Courier* two years ago over the signature of "Ivan." We understand that its author is JOHN SLEIGH, a tailor in Linlithgow, who has been an occasional contributor of very pleasing verse to the *Dundee Weekly News* and the local press for a number of years.

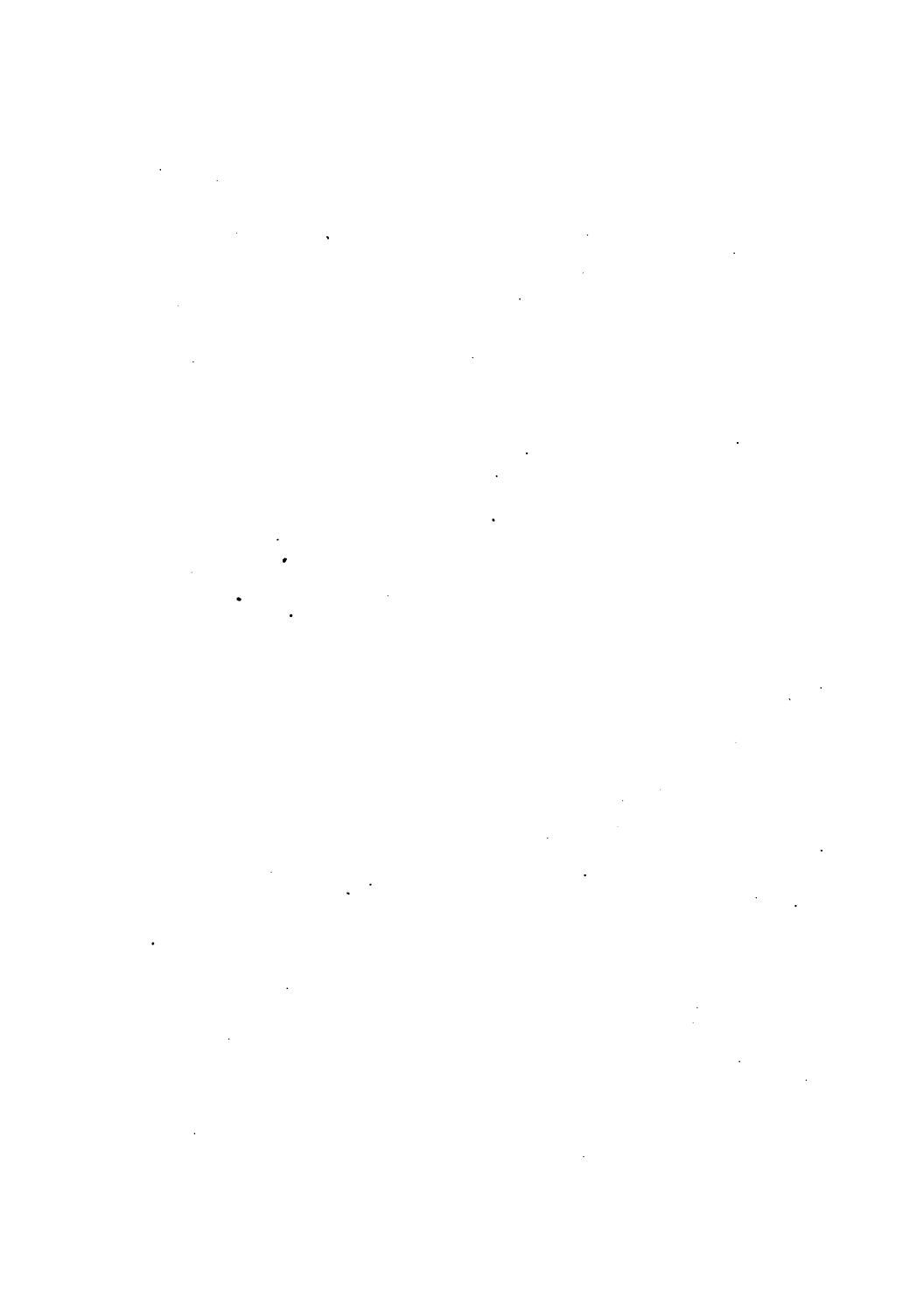
The flooers are bloomin' bricht and fair
Doon by the Avon side,
Sweet music fills the balmy air
O' simmer in its pride ;

The mavis sweetly pipes his lay
Within yon leafy den,
While, rapt in dreamy joy, I stray
In dear Carribber Glen.

Hoo aften dae I wander there
When simmer days are bricht,
To gaze upon its beauties rare,—
Enraptured at the sight !
Oh ! happy wad I be to bide
Deep in its floo'ry den,
And see at midnight fairies glide
Thro' auld Carribber Glen.

When weary and oppressed wi' care
'Tis guid to wander here,
For Nature, when the he'rt is sair,
Aye has the charin to cheer ;
When wark is ower I lo'e to steal
Far frae the haunts o' men ;
Sweet joys are found, I ken fu' weel,
In sweet Carribber Glen.

Lang may the birdies sing fu' sweet
A' thro' the sunny 'oors,
And bairnies wi' their wee bit feet
Rin 'mang thy bonnie flooers :
Whene'er I wander 'mang thy braes
God seems far nearer then,
And aften shall I tread thy ways,
Dear auld Carribber Glen.



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